

400-tonne 'timebomb' floats at sea

LONDON (R) — French and British warships gathered round a drifting freighter carrying a cargo of high explosives on Tuesday after its crew abandoned ship in mid-channel following a fire, coastguards said. The 1,000-tonne Danish coaster Hornstrand and its 400-tonne cargo of seismic gelatine explosives, used in mine operations, is being viewed by the authorities as a floating time bomb as it drifts in one of the world's busiest shipping lanes. Coastguard said authorities were considering whether to take the ship in tow, blow it up or, in the words of one coastguard officer, "use it as target practice." Ships and aircraft have been warned to stay clear of a nine-mile zone around the ship, drifting about 30 miles off the southern England channel harbour of Portland. The five-man crew took to the ship's lifeboat after fire broke out aboard the Hornstrand early Tuesday. They were picked up by a French navy helicopter and transferred to Cherbourg. Coastguards said the British frigate Beaver had approached the Hornstrand and reported that there was now no sign of fire.

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Assad receives French message

DAMASCUS (R) — A message from French Prime Minister Jacques Chirac dealing with events in Lebanon among other matters, was delivered on Tuesday to Syrian President Hafez Al Assad, the Syrian news agency (SANA) reported. Two Frenchmen are among 27 foreigners missing and believed kidnapped in Lebanon. Syria played a major role last November in helping to secure the release of two other French hostages held there.

Egyptian court rejects Numeiri case

CAIRO (R) — An Egyptian court ruled on Tuesday that the issue of whether ousted Sudanese President Jafar Numeiri should continue to have political asylum in Egypt was beyond its jurisdiction. Legal sources said the decision of the Cairo administrative court after eight months of hearings could still be challenged in a higher court. The case was brought by the Sudanese bar association which said Mr. Numeiri did not qualify for political asylum as he was wanted in Sudan to stand trial on charges of treason, abuse of power and corruption.

Danny Kaye dies

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Danny Kaye, the rubber-faced red-haired clown who worked his way up from busboy to Broadway, television and the movies and was known as the "ambassador to the world's children," died early Tuesday at 74. Kaye was hospitalized Sunday and died at 3:58 a.m. (1158 GMT) of heart failure.

Casey leaves hospital

WASHINGTON (R) — Former Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) Director William Casey, who had brain surgery in December, was released from Georgetown University hospital last Saturday, a hospital spokesman said. He said the hospital had no comment on Mr. Casey's condition.

Sweden probing its own 'Irangate'

STOCKHOLM (R) — Swedish authorities said Tuesday they were investigating the role of past governments in an illegal ammunition shipments to Iran and an arms smuggling scandal involving Sweden's biggest arm producer. The ammunition shipments affair was highlighted this week by a U.S. newspaper columnist who said the assassination of Prime Minister Olof Palme was linked to his attempts at mediation in the Iran-Iraq war. Assertions by journalist Richard Reeves in Sunday's New York Times magazine, although denied by the present Swedish government, has fuelled speculation in Swedish newspapers that Mr. Palme's unsolved murder may be connected to the Swedish "Irangate" saga.

U.S. to offer treaty on INF

WASHINGTON (R) — President Reagan said the United States would offer a draft treaty on medium-range missile reductions at talks with the Soviet Union in Geneva today. Mr. Reagan also said in a brief television appearance in the White House briefing room that he was summoning Ambassador Max Kampelman and the other top U.S. arms negotiators home for consultations later this week. He said they would then return to Geneva for detailed negotiations on the arms pact.

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Rifai: EC support for int'l conference is Arab victory

King has turned down U.S. invitation and is now awaiting American deeds to show goodwill and seriousness

AMMAN (J.T.) — Prime Minister Zaid Rifai has described the European Community's (EC) endorsement of the idea of convening an international conference on the Middle East as a victory for Arab diplomacy.

In an interview with the London-based Arabic-language magazine Al Sharq Al Awsat, Mr. Rifai said it had been a tough task to convince the Western countries of the soundness of the idea of an international peace conference on the Middle East as called for by His Majesty King Hussein and supported by resolutions adopted by the U.N. summit of 1982 and the Islamic and non-aligned blocs of states. Referring to Israel's rejection of the conference idea, Mr. Rifai said the Jewish state expected that the outcome of the conference would force it to withdraw from the occupied territories and that was the reason for its insistence on direct talks.

In the wide-ranging interview, published in the latest issue of Al Sharq Al Awsat, Mr. Rifai said: "The U.S. has lost a great deal in the Middle East as a result of its arms sales to Iran. Washington is now trying to regain its credibility and has invited the King to visit the U.S. but the King has declined to accept the invitation."

Geagea: Final Lebanon accord is distant

BEIRUT (Agencies) — The commander of Lebanon's biggest rightist militia said Tuesday a truce accord was the most he would consider in Syrian-sponsored talks on reforms aimed at ending 12 years of civil war.

"I don't think it is time for a final political accord," Lebanese Forces commander Samir Geagea told reporters. "We can't see a long-term political agreement with thousands of foreign troops in Lebanon."

Syria moved 7,000 troops into west Beirut last month and has maintained about 25,000 soldiers in north and east Lebanon. Up to 3,000 Israeli troops occupy a strip in the south of the country.

Dr. Geagea said he was coordinating closely with President Amin Gemayel on an approach to a Syrian-backed peace plan agreed by Lebanese Muslim leaders this weekend. He said he had not yet seen the plan.

"They (the Muslims) are telling us 'we have agreed among ourselves, take the agreement.' It is inconceivable," he said.

Berri renews exchange offer

BEIRUT (AP) — Justice Minister Nabih Berri on Tuesday renewed an offer to swap an Israeli airman held captive by his Shi'ite Amal militia for Arab prisoners in Israeli jails plus three Americans and one Indian kidnapped by extremists.

"We are prepared for the swap through the International Committee of the Red Cross as soon as the four captives are released," Mr. Berri told a news conference at his residence in west Beirut.

The four educators were kidnapped from the campus of Beirut University College Jan. 24. They are Robert Polhill, Alann Steen, Jesse Turner and Mithleshwar Singh, a native of India and legal resident alien of the United States.

An underground group calling itself Islamic Jihad for the Liberation of Palestine offered to swap the four educators for 400 Arab prisoners held in Israel.

Israel has refused to negotiate the swap and the kidnappers withdrew the offer after extending a deadline to kill the four teachers (See page 2).

attention of arriving at a joint Arab stand that can handle all Arab issues at all levels."

The prime minister said Jordan believed in solidarity among all Arab states and could not see any justification for disputes among them. The Kingdom has its policies and actions on the assumption that any dispute among Arab states should not reflect on joint Arab stands and cooperation, he said. Based on this belief, the prime minister said, His Majesty has been relentlessly working towards ending Arab differences and bringing Arab heads of state together.

— Jordan believes in naturally strong relations among Arab states and therefore is seeking to return Egypt to the Arab fold. Because of its central location between Egypt and Syria, Jordan is also trying to settle differences between the two countries, Mr. Rifai added.

— The only means to stop the six-and-a-half-year-old Gulf war is to persuade the Iranian leaders to accept the reality that they could never be victorious in the battlefield or achieve their objectives. "President Saddam Hussein (of Iraq) has, more than once, reaffirmed that he wants peace and an end to the conflict and proposed a peace plan," Mr. Rifai noted. "But Iran's rulers have turned down the offer as they did all other offers of peace and are continuing their war and causing more destruction."

Mr. Rifai said the King was of the view that all Arab, Islamic and international efforts be pooled together to convince Iran not to pursue the fruitless war and if such an endeavour failed to achieve success in ending the war, other efforts should be exerted to prevent Iran from launching more acts of aggression against Iraq.

On the situation in Lebanon, Mr. Rifai said it was the duty of all Arabs to contribute to the return of the war-torn country as an independent state. The prime minister noted that last week's deployment of a Syrian force in west Beirut was in response to requests from local leaders and warring militias.

"Lebanon," said Mr. Rifai, "is in need of an external force to restore peace to the country and pave the way for a national formula for reconciliation."

King Hussein, who met with Lebanese President Amin Gemayel in Jordan and Syrian President Hafez Al Assad in Damascus last month, discussed such a formula and the Syrian and Lebanese presidents are expected to meet soon, Mr. Rifai added.

A presidential spokesman said Mr. Gemayel was due to receive soon a blueprint of the political reforms demanded by the nation's Muslim leaders.

The proposals, reached over the weekend in Damascus, were passed on Monday to Mr. Gemayel's Sunni Muslim emissary Hani Salam during a two-hour meeting with Syrian Vice-President Abdul Halim Khaddam.

Mr. Salam will "hand over the proposals to the president upon his return to Lebanon, which is expected in 48 hours," said the spokesman.

The Lebanese media said the blueprint involves three major amendments to the Lebanese constitution designed to give Muslims a stronger say in the nation's decision-making by cutting down the president's powers.

Ex-President Camille Chamoun's National Liberal Party, the second largest Christian political group, said the reform proposals reached in Damascus "do not concern us."

He was speaking to reporters at his headquarters at the southern city of Basra, the target of a seven-week-long Iranian thrust which Iran declared over last week.

Abdul Jabbar Muhsen, Lebanese parliament head at Iraq's Defence Ministry, said last Friday Iran had sustained about 200,000 casualties in that offensive, leaving only 40,000 to 50,000 of its men still in the area.

Iraq's defence minister, General Adnan Khairallah, visited advanced Third Army Corps positions east of Basra on Monday.

Both sides have reported fierce fighting on the southern front since Iran announced last Thursday that its latest offensive was over.

In Kuwait, the secretary-general of the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC), voicing concern at the latest flare-up in the Iran-Iraq war, on Tuesday unveiled a fresh bid to end the conflict.

Sharifuddin Pirzadeh held talks with Kuwait's emir, Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmad Al Sabah, who as host of a summit last January for the 46-member OIC is current chairman of the organisation.

The secretary-general told newsmen afterwards: "The emir of Kuwait, as chairman, will send a communication to Iran and Iraq, so that contacts can be made to create an end to the conflict."

Prime Minister continues Vienna talks

VIENNA (Petra) — Prime Minister Zaid Rifai met here on Tuesday with Austria's Foreign Minister Alois Mock with whom he discussed Jordanian-Austrian relations and reviewed developments in the Middle East region, the Gulf war and the situation in Lebanon.

The meeting included a working lunch attended by Royal Court Chief Marwan Al Qasem and Mr. Adnan Talhouni, Jordan's ambassador to Vienna, as well as a number of Foreign Ministry officials.

The Austrian minister made a brief speech at lunch praising His Majesty King Hussein's efforts for reaching a just and durable solution to the Palestine problem, and praising relations between Jordan and Austria.

Mr. Rifai and Mr. Qasem arrived here on Monday to join His Majesty King Hussein in talks with Austrian President Kurt Waldheim and also to accompany the King on a visit to West Germany due to start on Thursday. Their Majesties King Hussein and Queen Noor are on a private visit to Austria.

Mr. Rifai on Monday met with Austrian Chancellor Franz Vranitzky with whom he reviewed bilateral relations and world issues.

Mr. Rifai explained Jordan's policies and its continuous efforts under King Hussein for a just and lasting peace in the Middle East.

Mr. Rifai also voiced Jordan's appreciation for Europe's support for the convening of an international conference to find a solution to the Middle East conflict. He also spoke about Jordan's five-year development scheme for the occupied West Bank.

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Sharaa meets senior Soviet officials

DAMASCUS (AP) — Foreign Minister Farouq Al Sharaa conferred on Tuesday with two senior Soviet officials in the first high-level contact between the two countries since Syrian forces moved into west Beirut 10 days ago. The Syrian Arab News Agency (SANA) said Mr. Sharaa met with the Soviet officials — Mikhail Sytenko, a roving ambassador, and Dzenadai Tarasov, deputy director of the Soviet Foreign Ministry. They discussed "international developments and the current situation in the Middle East," said the agency. It gave no other details. The meeting at Mr. Sharaa's office also was attended by Soviet Charge d'Affaires Alexander Azencenko. The Soviet ambassador in Syria, Alexander Dzasokhov, is currently in Moscow for consultations. Mr. Sytenko and Mr. Tarasov arrived on Monday in Syria. Their trip coincides with revived moves to convene an international conference on the Middle East under U.N. auspices.

Israelis impose curfew on Balata, Askar amid continuing protests

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — Protests erupted in two areas of the Israeli-occupied West Bank on Tuesday after Israeli troops shot dead a Palestinian student in the city of Nablus on Monday, an army spokesman said.

He said the army imposed a curfew on the Balata refugee camp outside Nablus after residents set up barricades and threw rocks at Israeli soldiers earlier on Tuesday.

In Ramallah, protests were reported at a women's teacher training college. The spokesman said students burned tyres and set up roadblocks.

Soldiers on Monday shot dead a Palestinian student and wounded another who the army claimed had run away after they were ordered to stop for an identity check.

The incident came after the Israeli authorities banned a march planned to commemorate the first anniversary of the assassination of Nablus Mayor Zafer Al Masri.

The Israeli army also imposed a curfew on Askar camp where masked demonstrators stoned

Israeli soldiers, according to the Palestine Press Service, which monitors news in the occupied territories.

Some 20,000 Palestinians live in the Balata and Askar camps, which are both on the outskirts of Nablus, some 55 kilometres north of Jerusalem.

Service banned

The army also banned at short notice a memorial ceremony for Mr. Masri.

The army ordered the Al Hakawati Theatre in East Jerusalem closed for 12 hours to prevent a ceremony marking the anniversary of Mr. Masri's assassination.

About 150 West Bank notables, including the mufti of Jerusalem, unaware the meeting had been banned, appeared at the theatre along with representatives of foreign consulates, and held an impromptu ceremony outside.

In Jerusalem, an Israeli bus was stoned and an Israeli passenger was injured outside the walled Old City, reports said.

In Jericho, Palestinian truck drivers used their lorries to block

the streets in a demonstration against low prices for their goods in the West Bank and restrictions on exports.

Syrian complaint at U.N.

Syria has complained to the United Nations that the Israeli authorities were blocking the export of citrus fruit from the Gaza Strip to the countries of the European Community.

In a letter to Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar, published at the United Nations on Tuesday, Syrian U.N. Charge d'Affaires Abdul Mounem Al Atassi said: "These measures threaten to create a slump in citrus production, which constitutes the primary source of income in the Gaza Strip."

"They are causing heavy losses to farmers and all those working in the field of citrus production and threaten to bring about economic disaster."

The Syrian envoy said the Israeli action was a violation of the Geneva conventions, the U.N. charter and the "legitimacy of the economic rights endorsed by the United Nations."

Reagan hunts for new CIA director

WASHINGTON (R) — President Ronald Reagan urgently sought a new director of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) on Tuesday, hoping to enlist a nominee of high prestige who is untainted by the Iran-contra scandal.

Despite a flurry of speculation involving some half a dozen possible candidates, there were signs the administration was having trouble finding someone ready to take on the job.

White House spokesman Martin Fitzwater was unable to tell reporters whether an announcement was to be made Tuesday. Other aides said an announcement was unlikely on Tuesday.

Howard Baker, Mr. Reagan's new chief of staff, said on Monday a plan to have the president announce a new nominee at the same time as the name of Robert Gates, the acting director, was withdrawn "didn't quite come together."

He said the finding of a new director "is an urgent item on the president's agenda and we hope to have a name to submit very soon indeed."

The evident difficulty in finding a new CIA chief underlined Mr. Reagan's potential problems in filling personnel spots as he moves into his last two years in office weakened by the scandal over the secret sale of arms to Iran and diversion of profits to U.S.-backed rebels in Nicaragua.

In withdrawing Mr. Gates' name, Mr. Reagan bowed to Senate pressure and Mr. Gates' own fears, expressed in a letter to the president, that a prolonged period of uncertainty over his confirmation by the Senate would harm the CIA.

Mr. Gates' nomination to succeed ailing former CIA chief William Casey had run into trouble because of the CIA's role in the Iran-contra scandal at a time when he was deputy director.

On Tuesday Mr. Reagan worked on an address to the nation seen as crucial in his effort to demonstrate that he is firmly in charge of the government despite last week's damaging report by a presidential panel that showed

Craxi resigns

ROME (AP) — Socialist Premier Bettino Craxi, faced with bitter divisions in his five-party coalition, resigned Tuesday, ending Italy's longest-lived post-war government.

The resignation, which had been expected, plunged Italy into a political crisis that politicians said could lead to general elections this spring, a year ahead of schedule.

President Francesco Cossiga asked Mr. Craxi, Italy's first socialist premier, to stay on as caretaker until the new, 46th post-war government is formed.

Mr. Craxi, whose term lasted 3½ years, told coalition leaders last Friday that he intended to resign this week due to feuding over which party should hold the premiership.

He announced the decision Tuesday afternoon in a nationally televised speech to the Senate and then formally presented his resignation to Mr. Cossiga at the Quirinal Palace.

In his 20-minute speech, Mr. Craxi said he was resigning because coalition differences had created "a political atmosphere that has become stifling and harmful for everyone."

He said he was leaving after "3½ years of political stability, after arguments won and arguments lost."

"The image of Italy has grown in the world... progress made, stability found," he said as Foreign Minister Giulio Andreotti, a potential successor, sat stone-faced on his right.

Mr. Craxi, 53, had been in office since August 1983 at the head of a coalition of Socialists, Christian Democrats, Republicans, Liberals and Social Democrats. He was credited with bringing political and economic stability to a country accustomed to revolving-door governments.

Mr. Cossiga will consult with various political leaders before appointing a premier-designate, possibly later this week. He is widely expected to choose Mr. Andreotti, a Christian Democrat who has served as premier five times.

Chadian rebels announce ceasefire; claim U.S. troops on 16th parallel

Qadhafi condemns 'foreign troops in Chad'

LONDON (R) — The leader of the Libyan-backed Transitional Government of National Unity (GUNT) rebel coalition in Chad announced a three-day ceasefire and said U.S. soldiers had appeared at the 16th parallel which divides the state.

GUNT leader Acheikh Ibn Umar made the announcement in a televised speech to the Libyan General People's Congress at Sabha Monday, in southern Libya, which was monitored by the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC).

He said the ceasefire was to mark the tenth anniversary of the establishment of the People's Revolutionary Government in Libya and to show the GUNT's readiness to seek a peaceful settlement.

Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi welcomed the ceasefire announcement and called on the N'Djamena government to "get rid of the French and Americans" in order to make peace possible.

Acheikh Ibn Umar said President Hissene Habre was only able to control southern Chad because of "blatant intervention" by France aided by "American imperialism."

The GUNT leader said Mr. Habre was also backed by Egypt and Zaire.

France, which supports the Habre government, has an estimated 2,400 troops in the southern

half of its former colony but has avoided sending them over the 16th parallel, known as the red line. The line has effectively divided Chad into a Libyan-held north and a government-controlled south for four years.

Washington has also sent material aid to the government.

"We Chad's forces, cannot recognise or be subjected to any fake government which is established in our country by the power of French, American and other aircraft and armies," the GUNT leader said.

He added that the GUNT was prepared to continue its armed struggle "at any cost and at any distance against France, against America, against the racist regime in the south of the continent and against the Zionist regime and all sorts of reactionary aspects."

Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi on Monday urged Chad to rid itself of the French and American "presence" in order to make peace with Libya.

"If (Chad President Hissene) Habre gets rid of the French and

the Americans, then there would not be any problem between him and us," Col. Qadhafi said during a speech broadcast on Libyan state television and monitored in London.

"Quite the contrary, Libya would then help him and he could have reconciliation," Col. Qadhafi said.

Libyan troops occupy the northern half of Chad and have been battling government forces since December.

The official Libyan News Agency JANA, monitored in Rome, carried excerpts of the speech by Col. Qadhafi in Sabha.

Col. Qadhafi said he welcomed the ceasefire announcement by Acheikh Ibn Umar, adding that Libya would make the "utmost efforts" to reconcile all Chadians.

"We do not believe that Acheikh Ibn Umar or Goukouni Oueddei are seeking power," Col. Qadhafi said in his broadcast speech. "They are seeking peace for Chad, unity for Chad and the Chadian people to be free to choose. They can choose Habre or Omar or Goukouni."

Col. Qadhafi once backed Mr. Goukouni, a former Chadian president overthrown by Mr. Habre.

"There can be no accord in the presence of imperialist forces at our borders," Col. Qadhafi said

at the celebrations.

He added in the broadcast speech: "The confrontation is with the French and the American forces ... if tomorrow, the French and the Americans leave, and if it becomes clear to me that there is a government in Chad which is not hostile to Libya, then tomorrow I would invite its president to come here and I would have discussions with him, no problem."

Chad government radio, in reports monitored Monday in the Ivory Coast, said that Chadian government forces repulsed an attack by Libyans in the north western mountains of Chad.

JANA, on a dispatch reporting Col. Qadhafi's speech, said the leader "warned against the danger of indulging in consumerism and the flooding of the market with imported goods."

Libyan consumers have for years suffered from a shortage of such goods as toilet paper, soap and meat.

Col. Qadhafi also declared in his speech, according to JANA: "I confirm that the aim of the revolution is only to make the Libyan people free. I have no vision to impose upon you. I did not launch the revolution to govern you."

Col. Qadhafi took power in a 1969 coup.



Carnage at Shatila: Shatila Palestinian refugee camp after three months of shelling which destroyed or seriously damaged 95 per cent of the camp. Refugees are seen through a Shi'ite Amal militia siege barrier. Four thousand Palestinian refugees still live among the rubble.

U.S. reportedly asked Carter to cancel Syria trip

NEW YORK (R) — The Reagan administration has asked former President Jimmy Carter to drop plans to visit Syria this month but he has refused, the New York Times reported Tuesday.

"We've explained what our policy is and certainly we tried to encourage him not to go," the newspaper quoted a government official as saying.

The newspaper quoted administration officials as saying Mr. Carter had refused the request and had said he would be going as a private citizen, not as an emissary of the government.

Mr. Carter was not available for comment, the newspaper said.

However, the New York Times also reported, the officials saying that if Mr. Carter does go ahead with the visit, they were considering asking him to deliver an official message to Syria about U.S. hostages in Lebanon.

They said Syrian influence with Iranian-backed groups believed to be holding some of the hostages may have increased since a new contingent of Syrian troops was deployed in west Beirut last week.

The administration had no immediate comment on the report.

The newspaper also quoted a Carter associate, Kenneth Stein, as saying Mr. Carter had no firm plans for a stop in Syria when he tours the Middle East later this month.

Mr. Stein said the tour would include Algeria, Egypt, Jordan and Israel and that a possible visit to Damascus had been discussed.

Runcie seeks Fadlallah's help to free Terry Waite

BEIRUT (AP) — A pro-Iranian Shi'ite Muslim cleric has received a letter from Archbishop of Canterbury Robert Runcie thanking him for efforts to free hostage negotiator Terry Waite, a leftist newspaper said Tuesday.

As Saif said Sheikh Mohammed Hussein Fadlallah, a leader of the radical Shi'ite Hezbollah, received Runcie's letter "a few days ago."

There was no immediate reaction to the daily newspaper's report from officials at Runcie's seat, Lambeth Palace.

Hezbollah, or Party of God, is made up of Shi'ite extremists loyal to Iran's revolutionary patriarch Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini.

Mr. Waite, Runcie's personal emissary, went missing on Jan. 20 when he left his west Beirut

seaside Rivera Hotel to negotiate with holders of two American hostages kidnapped in 1985.

Runcie, the paper said, had "sent a letter to Fadlallah upon Mr. Waite's abduction requesting his help" in obtaining the Anglican Church envoy's freedom.

Fadlallah replied to Runcie's first letter "explaining that he had exerted intensified efforts, but failed to obtain the Anglican envoy's freedom," the paper said in its unattributed report. It did not elaborate.

In addition to Mr. Waite, 26 foreigners are missing and believed kidnapped in Lebanon. They are eight Americans, six Frenchmen, two Britons, two West Germans, two unidentified, two Saudis, one Italian, one Irishman, one South Korean and an Indian.

Iranian guerrillas claim killing 6 Tehran agents

NICOSIA, Cyprus (AP) — Iranian anti-government guerrillas claimed Tuesday they shot dead six and wounded another four government agents in a gun battle in the city of Mashhad in north east Iran last month.

The guerrillas lost one man and two "innocent bystanders" were also killed when the attacked government Revolutionary Guards "fired wildly in every direction during the extensive confrontation," said a statement by the People's Mujahadeen.

The statement was telecast to the Associated Press in Nicosia from the Washington office of the group, the most active organisation fighting against the government of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini.

It added that Abdul Rahim Barati, "an important intelligence agent in Mashhad, was among the dead."

More than 100 Revolutionary Guards were mobilised from

throughout the city to fight off the attack which was launched during the night on Feb. 14, the statement said.

Earlier Mujahadeen statements said that on the same date Revolutionary Guards opened fire on hundreds of people in the north western city of Tabriz who were protesting against the Iran-Iraq war, wounding several.

In a statement issued Monday the Mujahadeen claimed killing 20 Revolutionary Guards during an attack on a Guards base in Baneh in western Iran.

The Iranian government has not commented on any of the Mujahadeen claims, which could not be confirmed independently.

The guerrilla group has reported an increase in its operations inside Iran over the past month, including an attack in which Hadi Khamenei, the brother of President Ali Khamenei was wounded.

Israeli generals propose to scrap Lavi

This report has been subjected to Israeli military censorship

TEL AVIV (R) — Israeli general staff, under pressure from the United States, has proposed scrapping the controversial Lavi warplane on cost grounds and buying advanced American F-16s instead, defence sources said Tuesday.

They said the recommendation was submitted by the key planning branch of the defence staff to Chief of Staff Gen. Moshe Levy.

Officials said the Defence Ministry remained committed to developing the Lavi, primarily a ground-attack aircraft, equipped with revolutionary avionics, but was studying alternatives suggested by the United States.

Washington and Israel have been engaged in an increasingly bitter dispute over whether the Israelis can afford the prestige aircraft, which has already cost \$1.3 billion largely of American taxpayers' money.

Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir was non-committal about the programme when pressed by U.S. Secretary of Defence Casper Weinberger to drop it during a visit to Washington last month.

U.S. Deputy Undersecretary of Defence Dov Zakheim said last week that Israel would risk being defeated in another Middle East war if it pursued plans to build the Lavi, Hebrew for lion.

He said completion of the programme would force Israel to sacrifice other weapons systems necessary for victory.

That view is known to be shared by Maj.-Gen. Don Shomron, appointed recently to take over from Gen. Levy next month as chief of staff.

The Pentagon has said each Lavi will cost \$22.1 million, compared with Israel's \$14.5-million estimate.

Israel initially planned to build 300 Lavis but defence sources have said the air force could probably only accommodate between 75 and 150 in its order of battle, thus increasing the unit cost.

Zakheim presented a series of alternatives to Israel in January, including two versions of the F-16 incorporating some of the ground-breaking Israeli cockpit computer systems.

He said the cheapest F-16 alternative would cost \$14.6 million a plane, a figure on which Israeli officials have since cast serious doubt.

U.S. Rep. Lee Hamilton chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Middle East Subcommittee, said at the time that the U.S. General Accounting Office report raised "serious financial questions" about the controversial project.

Qadhafi condemns Iranian bombing of Baghdad

LONDON (R) — Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi has condemned the "war of the cities" between Iraq and Iran and said that although Tripoli backed the Iranian revolution it opposed the shelling of Baghdad.

Col. Qadhafi, in a speech carried live by Libyan television and monitored by the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), said

Tripoli's stand towards the Iranian Revolution was unshaken but "... When it is a question of missile attacks on Baghdad ... we cannot accept it, nor can we consider it an act necessitated by the revolution."

"I am against the shelling of Tehran, Tabriz, Isfahan, Dezful and Qom," Col. Qadhafi said.

Reagan to name Pelletreau as new envoy to Tunisia

WASHINGTON (USIA) — President Reagan on March 2 announced his intention to nominate Robert Pelletreau, Jr., a career member of the Senior Foreign Service Class of Minister Counsellor, as ambassador to Tunisia, succeeding Peter Sebastian.

Mr. Pelletreau has been deputy

assistant secretary of defence for Near East and South Asia since 1985. Since entering the Foreign Service in 1962, he has served in Morocco, Mauritania, Lebanon, Jordan, Algeria, Syria and Bahrain as well as Washington. In Bahrain he served as U.S. ambassador.

Iran pardons 1,800 prisoners

LONDON (R) — Iran's spiritual leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini has pardoned 1,800 prisoners in three cities of the south eastern province of Sistan-Baluchistan, the Iranian News Agency IRNA reported Tuesday.

The pardons were among those granted on last month's eighth

anniversary of the Islamic Revolution, the agency, received in London, said.

It quoted the head of the provincial revolutionary courts as saying that of the 1,800, some 1,300 had been released and the others had had their sentences commuted.

U.S. to indict Israeli colonel for role in spy case

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — The United States will charge an Israeli air force colonel with espionage for his alleged role in recruiting convicted spy Jonathan Jay Pollard, Israel Radio reported Tuesday.

The report said prosecutors would ask a U.S. grand jury to indict Col. Aviem Sella.

The report by the state-run radio's respected Washington correspondent Shimon Schiffer quoted officials in the U.S. Justice Department as saying charges "against three other Israelis involved in the affair would be filed soon."

Indictments against Col. Sella and the others would violate what Israel has viewed as an unspoken agreement that the United States would not file charges against any Israelis in exchange for Israel's cooperation in the Pollard indictment.

Pollard, a 32-year-old former U.S. civilian navy analyst who pleaded guilty to espionage charges last summer, is due to be sentenced Wednesday and could be sentenced to life imprisonment.

Israel apologised to the United States at the time of Pollard's arrest and said the spy ring was an isolated renegade operation.

But Pollard, in a statement last week to a U.S. district court,

claimed that the "highest echelons" of Israeli government helped coordinate his spy activities.

The expected U.S. action against Col. Sella came amid growing tensions between the United States and Israel over reports that the air force colonel was recently promoted to an undisclosed high-level post in the military.

The daily newspaper Ha'aretz reported an Israeli diplomat was summoned for a "serious discussion" at the State Department last week, when U.S. officials complained that Israel was going back on a promise not to reward Israelis involved in the scandal.

Israeli sources, speaking to the Associated Press on condition of anonymity, said a compromise had been worked out with the U.S. Defence Department whereby Col. Sella would receive an increase in responsibility without an actual promotion in rank.

But the sources said Col. Sella might receive a higher rank later.

Col. Sella was recently promoted to commander of Israel's second, largest air base, although Israeli sources told Reuters in Tel Aviv the highly-decorated fighter pilot was denied elevation to Brigadier General because of U.S. pressure.

TV & RADIO

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel. 77311-19

PROGRAMME ONE
15:30 Koran
15:35 Cartoons (Films)
16:10 Children's programme
17:00 Children's programme
17:20 Walt Disney
18:10 Arabic series
19:20 Local programme
20:00 News in Arabic
20:30 Message from Cairo
20:40 Arab series
21:40 Wrestling
22:45 Arab series
23:00 News in Arabic

PROGRAMME TWO

18:00 Des chiffres et des lettres
18:20 L'écrit des lettres
19:00 News in French
19:15 Aujourd'hui en Jordanie
19:30 News in Hebrew
19:45 Varieties
20:00 News in Arabic
20:30 Three's Company
21:10 Documentary: "A gentle way with cancer" (eps. 1)
22:20 News in English
22:30 Bestseller: Capote and the Kings eps. (5)

RADIO JORDAN

855 KHz. AM & 99 MHz. FM & partly on 95.0 KHz. SW
Tel. 77411-19

07:00 News
07:30 News
08:00 Morning Show
08:30 Morning Show
09:00 Morning Show
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BBC WORLD SERVICE

630, 720, 1223 KHz

06:00 Newsdesk 06:30 People and Pets
06:40 Book Choice 06:45 Radio 4
06:50 Financial News 07:00 World News 07:09 24 Hours: News Summary
07:30 Report on Religion 07:45 The World Today 08:00 Newsdesk 08:30 Meridian 09:00 World News 09:09 24 Hours: News Summary 09:30 Development '87 10:00 World News 10:09 Reflections 10:15 Classical Record Review 10:30 One Up One Down 11:00 World News 11:09 British Press Review 11:15 The World Today 11:30 Financial News; Look Ahead 11:45 Patrick Markey's Music Box 12:00 News Summary; Outlook 12:30 My World 13:00 World News 13:09 News About Britain 13:15 People and Pets 13:25 A Letter from Wales 13:30 Meridian 14:00 Radio News 14:15 Masterpiece in Miniature 14:25 The Farming World 14:45 Sports Round-up 15:00 World News 15:09 24 Hours: News Summary 15:30 Development '87 16:00 World News; Outlook 16:30 Report on Religion 17:00 Radio Newsdesk 17:15 A Music of World 17:30 Two Cheers for February 18:00 World News 18:09 Commentary 18:15 Rock Salad 18:45 The World Today 19:00 World News 19:09 A Letter from Wales 19:15 Technologies for the 21st Century 19:30 News Ideas 19:40 Book Choice 19:50 Sports Round-up 20:00 Newsdesk 20:45 International Soccer Special 21:45 Soccer Contd.

VOICE OF AMERICA

MW 1260 & SW 7200, 9565, 11740, 11925 and 15210 KHz

05:00 News 05:10 Newsline 05:30 VOA Morning 06:00 News 06:10 Newsline 06:30 VOA Morning 07:00 News 07:10 Newsline 07:30 VOA Morning 08:00 News 08:10 Newsline 08:30 VOA Morning 09:00 News 09:10 Newsline 09:30 VOA Morning 10:00 News 10:10 Newsline 10:30 VOA Morning 11:00 News 11:10 Newsline 11:30 VOA Morning 12:00 News 12:10 Newsline 12:30 VOA Morning 13:00 News 13:10 Newsline 13:30 VOA Morning 14:00 News 14:10 Newsline 14:30 VOA Morning 15:00 News 15:10 Newsline 15:30 VOA Morning 16:00 News 16:10 Newsline 16:30 VOA Morning 17:00 News 17:10 Newsline 17:30 VOA Morning 18:00 News 18:10 Newsline 18:30 VOA Morning 19:00 News 19:10 Newsline 19:30 VOA Morning 20:00 News 20:10 Newsline 20:30 VOA Morning 21:00 News 21:10 Newsline 21:30 VOA Morning 22:00 News 22:10 Newsline 22:30 VOA Morning 23:00 News 23:10 Newsline 23:30 VOA Morning 24:00 News 24:10 Newsline

WHAT'S GOING ON

TODAY'S EVENTS

EXHIBITIONS

* An exhibition of plastic arts marking the University of Jordan's silver jubilee at the university (until Mar 4).

* An art exhibition by Abdel Naser Odeh at the Jordanian Plastic Artists Association in Jabal Lubdeh (until March 7).

* An art exhibition depicting social life in Jordan and Egypt by Ibrahim Tannoubi at the Petra Bank Gallery.

* "L'avenir d'Emile" a French film at 8:00 p.m. at the Royal Cultural Centre.

DOCUMENTARY

* Friends of Archaeology — film showing about historical restoration in Turkey, at 7:00 p.m. at the American Centre.

CULTURAL CENTRES

Royal Cultural Centre .. Tel. 6610267
American Centre .. 644771
British Council .. 6361478
French Cultural Centre .. 637009
Goethe Institute .. 641993
Soviet Cultural Centre .. 644203
Spanish Cultural Centre .. 630409
Turkish Cultural Centre .. 639777
Haya Arts Centre .. 665195
Hussein Youth City .. 6671816
Y.W.C.A. .. 641793
Y.W.M.C.A. .. 664251
Amman Municipal Library .. 637111
Univ. of Jordan Library .. 843555

MUSEUMS

* Children's Heritage and Science Museum. Fun and knowledge for all ages, plus a small planetarium. Open all week 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. and 3:30 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. Closed on Friday. Facilities: Museum; Jewelry; and costumes over 100 years old. Also models from Madaba and Jerash (4th to 18th centuries). The Roman Theatre, Amman. Opening hours: 9:00 a.m. - 5 p.m. Year-round. Tel. 651760.
Jordan Archaeological Museum. Has an excellent collection of the anti-

CHURCHES

St. Joseph Church (Roman Catholic) Jabal Amman, Tel. 642590.
Church of the Annunciation (Roman Catholic) Jabal Lubdeh, Tel. 637440.
De la Salle Church (Roman Catholic) Jabal Hussein, Tel. 661757.
Terrasanta Church (Roman Catholic), Jabal Lubdeh, mass in Italian language, meet every Sunday at 5:30 p.m. Tel. 622366.
Church of the Ascension (Greek Orthodox) Abdali, Tel. 623541.
Anglican Church (Church of the Redeemer) Jabal Amman, Tel. 678906.
Armenian Catholic Church Ashrafieh, Tel. 771331.
Armenian Orthodox Church Ashrafieh, Tel. 772561.
St. Ephraim Church (Syrian Orthodox) Ashrafieh, Tel. 771751.
Armenian International Church (Inter-denominational): meets at Southern Baptist School in Shamsiah, Tel. 677534.
Evangelical Lutheran Church Jabal Amman, 6th Circle, (Rev. N. Smir), Tel. 811255.

PRAYER TIMES

06:00 Fajr
06:30 (Sunrise) Duha
11:45 Asr
15:45 Asr
17:37 Maghrob
18:35 Isha

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian Information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (08) 53200-5, where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS ROYAL JORDANIAN FLIGHTS (Terminal 1)

07:00 Agaba (RJ)
07:30 Damascus (RJ)
08:30 Kuwait (RJ)
09:00 Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
10:00 Cairo (RJ)
10:30 New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
11:00 Los Angeles, Chicago, Vienna (RJ)
11:30 London, Geneva (RJ)
12:00 Bangkok (RJ)
12:30 Madrid, Belgrade (RJ)
13:00 Bagdad (RJ)

OTHER FLIGHTS (Terminal 2)

06:20 Frankfurt (LH)
06:40 Cairo, London (BA)
06:45 Damascus, Tripoli (PK)
10:15 Damascus, Rome (AZ)
10:30 Damascus (TV)
12:20 Larnaca, Zurich (SL)
12:45 Kuwait (GF)
14:00 Medina, Jeddah (SV)
14:30 Doha, Muscat (KU)
15:00 Kuwait (KU)
15:45 Kuwait (KU)
16:00 Medina, Jeddah (SV)
19:30 Bagdad (LA)
20:30 Sana'a (TY)
22:30 Rio de Janeiro (LA)
00:05 Karachi (PK)

DEPARTURES ROYAL JORDANIAN FLIGHTS (Terminal 1)

06:00 Agaba (RJ)
06:30 Vienna, New York (RJ)
07:30 London (RJ)
08:30 Cairo (RJ)
09:00 Bahrain, Doha (RJ)
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OTHER FLIGHTS (Terminal 2)

Swareddahab visits Amman municipality

AMMAN (Petra) — Former head of the military council in Sudan Field Marshal Abdul Rahman Swareddahab on Tuesday called at the Greater Amman Municipality and met with Mayor Abdul Ra'ouf Al Rawabdeh and members of the municipality council.

Mr. Rawabdeh briefed the Sudanese visitor on the development of the city of Amman and the services offered to its citizens. The mayor also outlined a programme for developing public services from now until the year 2005, in addition to projects being carried out by the municipality's Urban Development Department.

During the visit, Marshal Swareddahab received Amman's shield as a commemorative gift from Mr. Rawabdeh.

Later, both made a tour of a number of sites in Amman, including the Roman Amphitheatre, the Royal Hashemite Park, Queen Noor Park and Al Khassaa community centre which is run by the General Federation of Jordanian Women.



Greater Amman Mayor Abdul Ra'ouf Al Rawabdeh (left) presents Field Marshal Abdul Rahman Swareddahab with the municipality's shield during his visit to the municipality on Tuesday (Petra photo)

During the tour, Marshal Swareddahab was briefed on the centre's activities and programmes and on urban development projects.

Regent attends lunch for Swareddahab
His Royal Highness Crown

Prince Hassan, the Regent, on Tuesday attended a luncheon in honour of Field Marshal Abdul Rahman Swareddahab. The luncheon was hosted by Dr. Daoud Hananiya, the director of the Royal Medical Services. The luncheon was attended by a number of senior officials.

Haj Hassan reviews agenda for talks on Arab labour

AMMAN (Petra) — A Jordanian delegation grouping representatives of the government, employers and workers in Jordan will take part in the 15th meeting of the Arab labour conference due to open in Baghdad on March 17.

The delegation will be led by Minister of Labour and Social Development Khaled Al Haj Hassan who will deliver Jordan's address which will cover violations of the Israeli authorities' rights, the Gulf War and Jordan's stand on these issues.

To prepare for the Baghdad conference, a meeting was held at the Ministry of Labour on Tuesday under the chairmanship of Mr. Haj Hassan. During the meeting, the relationship between the government, employers and workers and labourers in Jordan was discussed. The minister underlined the importance of the subjects on the conference's agenda and the need for representatives of each side to come to agreement on various issues of concern to Jordan on the regional and international levels.

He said that among the subjects to be discussed at the Baghdad conference was a memorandum which the Arab labour office will submit to the 73rd meeting of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) general conference in Geneva to be held in June. The ILO general conference is expected to detail the conditions of Arab labourers living and working under Israeli rule and will discuss Israel's arbitrary measures against Arab workers and businesses.

At the Baghdad conference, efforts will be made to coordinate the stands of Arab governments for the Geneva conference, the minister continued.

The Cabinet, earlier formed Jordan's delegation to the Baghdad meeting.

Labour Ministry takes further steps to regulate foreign workforce

- Ministry recommends replacing 239 non-Jordanians in government offices
- Official calls on women to give up their jobs and devote time to their families

By a Jordan Times Staff Writer

AMMAN — The Ministry of Labour has recommended to Prime Minister Zaid Rifai that the services of 239 non-Jordanian workers employed by 19 ministries and government departments be terminated because Jordanian substitutes have been found to take their place.

The recommendation was coupled with a list of these jobs and the departments which employ them and also included a statement emphasising the need for implementing this step in order to make way for the employment of Jordanians seeking jobs at present. This step was taken as part of the ministry's five-year plan to find employment for Jordanian people who can take the place of non-Jordanians employed in various public and private institutions, the Ministry of Labour's statement said.

In a related development, Dr. Mansour 'Utum, the director of employment at the Ministry of Labour, on Tuesday issued a call to housewives who employ non-Jordanian domestic servants whose salaries are comparable to their earnings, to give up their jobs and devote their time to their home and children and thereby make way for other women in need of jobs to take their place and support their families.

Dr. 'Utum said that Jordan is presently employing approximately 100,000 workers of whom 21,000 are non-Arab workers and approximately 9,000 are domestic servants. The majority of workers in the country are Arabs — mainly Egyptians — who constitute nearly 80 per cent of the non-Jordanian workforce.

These figures do not include foreign workers without valid work permits and it has been estimated that the number of those working illegally in the country amounted to an additional 100,000 last year.

The issue of growing local unemployment promoted the Ministry of Labour to introduce a series of increasingly strict measures to regulate the employment of foreign nationals.

During 1986, teams from the ministry conducted random checks at businesses to ensure that foreign workers held the correct and valid papers for the jobs they were doing. This was

followed by checks at border points and the introduction of stiffer penalties for those found violating the labour law.

Employers of domestic servants and other non-Jordanian workers in the country will from now on pay JD 150 in fees for work permits, under the latest regulations issued at the beginning of March 1987.

According to Dr. 'Utum, only those employed in nursing and agriculture will continue to pay JD 50 for their annual work permits. The new measures were taken by the Ministry of Labour in an effort to rationalise the employment of non-Jordanians and to give Jordanian workers the opportunity to take the place of foreigners wherever this is possible, Dr. 'Utum noted.

He said that domestic servants have to pay JD 150 in annual work permit fees but in cases where the servant is looking after old or infirm people they will be allowed to pay JD 50 and will be considered as nurses caring for the sick. Otherwise, he said, people in need of domestic servants should opt for local workers instead of employing non-Jordanian maids.

The rise in price of work permits for house-maids prompted a series of articles and letters in the Arabic press on the benefits, or

otherwise, of employing home helps.

Some writers commented on the social aspects of the issue and said that many mothers had handed over their household and children to maids who often speak poor English and no Arabic. The writers questioned whether either the mothers or the children were benefiting from this situation.

Other letters and articles said that the house-maids were steadily draining the economy by sending all their earnings back home and noted that although many of these girls needed the work to support their families, Jordan was not in a position to support another country's economy at the expense of those Jordanians without jobs.

The comments also raised the issue of the house-maids who were poorly treated and kept as 'status symbols' by families who either did not have a real need for help in the home or who could barely afford their keep.

Those writing in favour of house-maids said that extra help in the home freed Jordanian women to take up more productive work for the benefit of themselves and their families whilst providing work and a salary for someone coming from a poor country and with a family to support.

Heavy rain, but no snow, falls in Aqaba

By Ahmad Khreisani
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The port city of Aqaba on Tuesday witnessed a heavy fall of hail and rain accompanied by thunder, but no snow fell there, according to Dr. Ali Abanda, the director general of the Meteorology Department.

He said that snow could not have fallen in Aqaba, contrary to an earlier report by the Jordan News Agency, Petra, because the temperature ranged between eight and 16 degrees Centigrade.

Dr. Abanda said that the heavy rain and hail came as a result of the unstable atmospheric conditions over Aqaba and the south-

ern part of the Kingdom. He also noted that these conditions were affecting northern regions of the Arabian Peninsula.

Petra had reported that the rain and snow blocked roads and flooded streets for some time.

According to the Meteorology Department, the unstable conditions will continue for the next 24 hours with expected showers accompanied by thunder in different parts of the Kingdom.

The department said that despite this unstable condition, there will be a rise in temperature which will reach 16 degree Centigrade in Amman on Wednesday.

The Meteorological Department said that this will be followed by a depression bringing another stretch of relatively warm weather, only to be followed by a deep cold depression which is currently centred west of Greece.

Khatib meets Kuwaiti officials for talks on energy cooperation

KUWAIT (Petra) — Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources Hisham Al Khatib on Tuesday held a meeting with Kuwaiti Minister of Oil Sheikh Ali Al Khalifa Al Athbi to discuss Jordanian-Kuwaiti cooperation in petrochemical industries and means of promoting energy resources. The two ministers also discussed bilateral cooperation in oil related fields.

Dr. Khatib earlier met Mr. Mohammad Al Sayyed Abdul Mubsen Al Rifai, Kuwaiti minister of electricity and water, to discuss cooperation in energy and water affairs.

Dr. Khatib arrived in Kuwait

on Sunday for a visit expected to last several days, during which he will also discuss preparation for holding an international conference on oil in Amman in the autumn.

The conference will be organised in cooperation with the Organisation of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OAPEC) and the Kuwait-based Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development.

On Monday, the second day of his stay in Kuwait, Dr. Khatib met the country's minister of finance, Mr. Jassem Mohammad Muhammad Al Khuraifi.

Spanish-Arab cultural institute announces poetry competition

AMMAN (Petra) — The Spanish-Arab cultural institute which is run by the Spanish Foreign Ministry has announced a poetry competition under the name of the Ibn Zaidoun Ibn Khafaja and Wallada 1987 awards and has invited Arab poets to take part in the event.

A spokesman for the Depart-

ment of Culture and Arts in Amman said that poets of different nationalities can take part in the competition which offers three main awards. The poems can be in either Spanish or Arabic provided that the poetry submitted to the competition has not been published or translated into other languages.

Specialists arrive for start of medical conference today

AMMAN (I.T.) — Delegations of medical experts and physicians from Arab and foreign countries continued to arrive in Amman on Tuesday to take part in the fifth Jordanian medical conference which will open today at Al Hussein Youth City under royal patronage.

The delegation will discuss 136 working papers submitted by Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Tunisia, Kuwait, Syria, the United Arab Emirates and a number of foreign countries.

The papers deal with a host of subjects ranging from heart diseases to cancer and industrial

medicine, with special attention to be given to mortality among children in Jordan and a general health conditions in the occupied Arab territories.

The conference was organised by the Jordanian Medical Association (JMA) in cooperation with the Ministry of Health, the Royal Medical Services, the University of Jordan and the private sector.

Nearly 1,600 Jordanian physicians and specialists will take part in the conference which is expected to last three days and which will include a number of specialised seminars.

Radiation labs keep eye on imported foodstuffs

By Salameh B. Ne'matt
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Barring foul play, Jordanians need not worry about radioactive contamination resulting from the consumption of imported powder milk or other foods from Europe in the wake of the Chernobyl nuclear disaster, according to officials at the Royal Scientific Society's Jordan Radiation Protection Labs (JRPL).

The officials sought to dispel public fears that imported foods may be contaminated following press reports of discoveries of radioactive contamination in imported foods in neighbouring countries.

Mr. Ali Ajlouni, in charge of the Non-Destructive Testing (NDT) division and head of the JRPL, said that the full-scale radiation detection checks of all imported food originating from Europe ceased on Jan. 1, 1987. He said that JRPL, which became operational last year, now conducts contamination checks on nearly 20 to 30 different food items a day, with the exception of meat.

Mr. Ajlouni said that his staff make only "sporadic field visits" to meat import points in the Kingdom and make random checks on samples of these meats, at least once a week and on selected days.

Mr. Ajlouni's assurances notwithstanding, there was no way to ascertain that contaminated food is not being circulated in the market in between the sporadic checks.

'Foul play'

Furthermore, in theory, foul play cannot be ruled out. It has been demonstrated in the past, that exporters were able to export products into a certain country through a third party after faking the certificate of origin.

Mr. Ajlouni told the Jordan Times that foul play, such as the transfer of contaminated European food stuff to Jordan through a third, non-European country, constituted the only means of

landed contaminated food in the Kingdom. "But that would be cheating," he said, adding that such exporters, if caught, would be subject to legal action and would damage their reputation. He said that such action would be a crime against humanity.

"Our focus is on imported powder milk and other concentrated food," Mr. Ajlouni said in an interview. He explained that the cycle starts by the contamination of grass which is grazed upon by cattle, whose milk and meat is consumed by people.

Radiation risks from Caesium 134 and 137 in radioactive material stays for as long as 30 years while Iodine 131 dissipates after a maximum period of two and a half months. Therefore, checks are now made only to detect Caesium in food products.

Quoting figures from a prepared report, Mr. Ajlouni said that nearly 1,400 head of cattle, mostly imported from Romania and Bulgaria, were either destroyed or returned to the sender following detection of radioactivity from the Chernobyl accident. For the same reason, hay and thyme imported from Turkey was buried two metres deep in the Jordanian desert.

As a result of Jordan's strict radiation protection campaign, Mr. Ajlouni said, European exporters have been making sure that their Jordan-bound products are radiation-free.

Contaminated products in the UAE, Egypt

Contaminated food originating in Europe was detected last week in the United Arab Emirates, only after it had been circulated. The contaminated products were withdrawn from the market. In the same week, two cargo ships carrying 33.3 tonnes of contaminated food products were returned by the Egyptian government.

Contaminated West German milk exported to Egypt by private businessmen last month caused a public outcry and violent protests in both countries. Radioactive

contamination was first discovered in Germany, and the milk was immediately destroyed in Egypt.

The JRPL had been carrying radiation protection tests on imported products after Chernobyl, using barely sufficient equipment, until it started receiving more sophisticated equipment six months ago.

With the help of the Vienna-based International Atomic Energy Agency, the RSS labs obtained the Gamma Spectroscopy monitoring machine and the Alpha-Beta counting system and other low level counting equipment for a more accurate measurement of radioactive contamination.

The JRPL has plans to set up early warning stations all over the Kingdom for the purpose of alerting concerned authorities in the event of a nuclear accident in the region that may affect the population. Such an early warning network could reduce the time needed for taking protective measures such as the evacuation of people from contaminated areas and urgent hospitalisation of injured citizens.

Nearly 40 hospitals and medical centres in the Kingdom are now under continuous JRPL observation and are subject to regular tests for the detection of harmful radiation leaks from radioactive medical equipment.

Tests in hospitals

A device known as TLD (Thermo Luminiscent Dosimetre), provided by the JRPL, is now carried by 619 operatives (330 in government hospitals) of medical equipment in these hospitals. The TLD, introduced in November last year, serves to measure the accumulative dose of radiation absorbed by personnel working with radiation-emitting equipment.

TLD devices are collected every three months to be processed by special equipment at the JRPL in order to determine the amount of accumulated radiation dose each one of the personnel man-

ning radioactive medical equipment has absorbed.

Based on the results, and in the event of finding an operative who has been absorbing more than the acceptable level of radiation, the JRPL would recommend rotation of personnel, moving the operative into another section in the hospital or altogether ask him to change his job. This is usually accompanied by an investigation into the source of radiation in search for possible leaks.

The results from the first three months indicated that the exposure level of almost all of the 619 hospital personnel was in the safe bracket. The maximum permissible dose is 5,000 Micro Roentgen per year. Only one operative working at the Bashir Hospital recorded 2,000 Micro Roentgen for the three-month period and according to Mr. Ajlouni, there is an ongoing investigation into his case.

Radiation in phosphates

Mr. Ajlouni said that JRPL has also discovered radioactivity in phosphates and will soon be conducting a full test of the radiation level at the phosphate mines for the safety of workers at the plant.

JRPL is in need of supplementary equipment such as the "whole body counter" machine that specialises in measuring the level of radioactive material absorbed by the human body. There are three people working in the JRPL and the staff could be increased to 10 from the NDT division.

Threats to Jordan from a nuclear accident could emanate from any of several countries including Israel, Iraq, Egypt or any European country.

Mr. Hassan Khadra, director of the Technical Engineering Department of which JRPL is a part, said that the JRPL project was designed at the time of the establishment of the Royal Scientific Society to be a comprehensive national laboratory to detect any environmental pollution in the Kingdom.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Cabinet appoints mayors for 4 towns

AMMAN (Petra) — The Cabinet held an ordinary session on Tuesday and decided to appoint Mr. Mohammad Hilal Jawarneh as mayor of the town of Irbid Governorate, Mr. Radwan Al Dughaimat as mayor of Ghor Al Mazraa in Karak Governorate, Mr. Hassan Oqlah Al Qawaqneh as mayor of Al Hashemeh in Zarqa Governorate and Juma'a Mohammad Al Stabili as mayor of Mabas in Balqa Governorate. The Cabinet, which met under the chairmanship of Deputy Prime Minister Abdul Wahhab Al Majali also discussed a number of questions on the agenda and took appropriate measures.

Committee to draft copyright law

AMMAN (Petra) — A special committee has been set up to work out a draft law on the protection of copyrights and the rights of authors. The committee comprises Dr. Mousa Keilani, director general of the Press and Publications Department, Dr. Ahmad Shakas, director general of the Department of Libraries, Documentation and National Archives, Mr. Haidar Mahmoud, director general of the Department of Culture and Arts, and Mr. Mohammad Abu Hassan from the Ministry of Information. Dr. Keilani said that the formation of the committee is a new step towards modernising the existing law on copyrights.

JNGC director chosen for special study

AMMAN (Petra) — Dr. Ra'afat Al Majali, director of the Jordan National Geographic Centre (JNGC), has been selected by the international development and cooperation agency as one of three Arab experts to study the technology of remote sensing in the Arab World. Their study is expected to improve the area's natural resources and develop the Arab World's capabilities in using remote sensing in areas related planning and execution. The first meeting by the three experts will be held here at the end of this month to put forward their findings and recommendations.

Japan gives books to university

AMMAN (Petra) — The Japanese government on Tuesday gave the University of Jordan library a collection of books on economics, industry, management, development and statistical data on Japan's economic development. Dean of scientific research, Dr. Mohammad Al Bakiet received the gift from Japan's Ambassador to Jordan Akira Nakayama. Dr. Bakiet said the collection of books will assist the university's students and staff in preparing and conducting scientific research. Mr. Nakayama praised the ties between both countries and said his government was working to further consolidate them and in all aspects.

Hmoud visits stations in Irbid

IRBID (Petra) — Minister of Agriculture Marwan Hmoud on Tuesday made an inspection tour of agricultural stations in Irbid Governorate and met with agricultural specialists to discuss crop production in the northern regions of the country. Mr. Hmoud told agricultural specialists that the agricultural extension service should be developed to help increase production. The minister later visited the University of Science and Technology and met with its president, Dr. Kamel Ajlouni, and the dean of the faculty of engineering with whom he discussed agricultural research.

Fewer people use ferry link in January

AMMAN (Petra) — The number of passengers using the ferry link between Aqaba port and Nuweibeh port in Sinai during January 1987 dropped by 21,353 in comparison with figures for January 1986, according to a statistical bulletin issued by the Port Corporation. The bulletin said that the number of passengers travelling between the two ports in January 1987 was 24,774 against 46,127 in January 1986.

OBITUARY

The Gargour & Jallad families regret to announce with deep sorrow the death of **MRS. CHARLOTTE JALLAD**
The wife of **Allenby Tawfiq Gargour**

Who passed away in Lebanon.
The funeral ceremonies will be held in Lebanon on Wednesday 4/3/1987,
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From frying pan into the fire

STATISTICS reveal that since the sixties out of a total 280,000 Jews who left the Soviet Union only 175,000 have reached Israel. Last year out of 914 Soviet emigrants only 202 are reported to have gone to Israel. Even according to immigration officials it is observed that 90 per cent of Soviet Jews seeking emigration would prefer to settle in the U.S. rather than in Israel. This has been a gnawing issue for the Israeli government for some time and lately the U.S. has been asked to deny entry to Jews who leave the Soviet Union.

The reasons for Soviet emigrants spurning attractive offers to come to the "promised land" are not hard to find. It is in any case not their love for Zionist Israel that prompts most of the Soviet Jews to emigrate from the Soviet Union. Somehow many of them have not been able to put up with the communist system. A good many recognise the need to be well-off economically and socially in a free society with better opportunities for employment. Some also desire to promote basic human rights. But the hopeless socio-economic-political conditions in Israel are hardly attractive for them to realise their inner ethos and aspirations for which they have to seek places elsewhere under the sun.

First, Zionism in Israel is another virulent version of totalitarianism, comparable only to Hitlerism or the modern South African apartheid system. Even in a communist-ruled system the people of a country are accorded equal rights. But built into the Zionist system of Israel is racial discrimination which provides the Jews with one set of civic rules, awarding them many privileges, and the Arabs with another set, treating them as second-class citizens. Why should the Soviet Jews get into a country that is prone to explosion, resulting from such built-in socio-political cleavages?

Second, the Israeli economy which is always in doldrums as it depends constantly on the U.S., is a discouraging factor for any emigrant who is concerned with his own future economic prospects. Long periods of inflation, coupled with high military expenditures and corruption have drifted Israel away from a stable economy. Nobody would be keen to board a sinking vessel even if he is assured of finding "terra firma" at the bottom.

Third, the Israeli policy of "robbing Paul's land and making Peter settle on it" is degrading and would be unacceptable to emigrants. Very often the emigrants are given no choice but to settle on Arab lands which are under illegal Israeli occupation. This would get them into conflict situation and endless problems with the genuine owners of the land.

Last but not least, Zionist human rights violations in the West Bank have reached a level of notoriety with which no emigrant would be willing to associate. After having experienced the ill-effects of a communist system, opting to settle in Zionist Israel would be tantamount to falling from the frying pan into the fire. The U.S. would just help precipitating that tragedy if it were to deny entry to emigrant Jews from the Soviet Union.

ARABIC PRESS EDITORIALS

Al Ra'i: Thin hopes

OBSERVERS of Israeli politics must have noticed that the leaders of the Likud and Labour, the two blocs which form the present coalition are in agreement on the need for direct talks with the Arabs for a solution of the Middle East question. The leader of the Likud, Yitzhak Shamir, wants the Arabs and the Israelis to sit for direct talks outside the proposed international conference, while the other leader, Shimon Peres wants the international conference as a prelude leading to direct negotiations. One should not be taken in by Peres's statements about Israel's acceptance of the international conference idea because he wants such a conference to act as a tool for direct negotiations. Both leaders have never mentioned the aim of the talks which, for the Arabs, mean a complete Israeli withdrawal from the occupied lands in implementation of U.N. Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338. No one of the two leaders has explicitly said that the talks with the Arabs will result in restoring the rights of the Palestinian people in their homeland nor did they ever mention the need for establishing justice. What the Labour Party in Israel wants is a first session at the conference during which other parties can be present, and later direct negotiations between the Arabs and the Israelis. Therefore, as long as the Israelis refuse the idea of discussing the return of the land and the rights to their lawful owners, then the talk about an international conference is meaningless. Since the Israelis refuse the idea of implementing Security Council resolutions then there can be no hope for the establishment of peace.

Al Dustour: Educating message

PRINCE Hassan has called for rationalising investments in education and laid emphasis on quality rather than quantity in education during his meeting with educationalists and teachers in Amman on Monday. Prince Hassan said that the Ministry of Education must help the students to become creative and inventive, and that open dialogue should be encouraged and analytical study and research should be stepped up at all schools. He also stressed the need for enhancing the concepts of values and the sense of belonging among the younger generation, and the need for linking education with the community's needs and requirements. Prince Hassan's remarks serve as guidelines for the teachers and educationalists in Jordan who, he said, should help students to contribute to their country's development. Prince Hassan's visit and directives to the educationalists and teachers came at a time when our society is going through a stage of development, requiring deep thinking and sound planning. Prince Hassan realises that nearly half of the society are now students in Jordan or abroad at the elementary, secondary or university level, and for this reason educationalists shoulder a serious responsibility towards the future, through their work and their efforts at present.

Sawt Al Shaab: Time for education reforms

PRINCE Hassan made an inspection tour of schools in the Greater Amman region on Monday and met with educationalists, teachers and students to discuss their work and plans. Later at a meeting with educationalists, Prince Hassan made a general diagnosis of the educational situation in the Kingdom and laid stress on certain questions and points which he said would be instrumental in promoting the educational process in the country. The Prince urged the ministry of education to conduct a self appraisal of its work and plans and also to introduce measures aimed at enhancing the process of dialogue at schools and at encouraging students to become inventive and creative. The ministry and the educationalists, the Prince said, shoulder a great responsibility in developing the minds and the bodies of the younger generation and in planting the sense of national belonging among the young and promoting their ability to contribute towards the development of their country and society. Prince Hassan emphasised the fact that education and training of the young should serve the needs of development in the country, and that the education process should be continuous and with clear targets.

China's opportunities in the Middle East

By Lillian Craig Harris

RECENT press reports of Israeli sales of military technology to the People's Republic of China (PRC) underscore China's perception of the Middle East as a region of new economic and political opportunity. Elsewhere in the region, Chinese companies compete for contracts to export labourers to Iraq and technicians to Libya; at least 50,000 mainland Chinese now work in the Arab World. And the Chinese military, which finds itself on the bottom financial rung of the "four modernisations," has fed its need for cash by reviving up China's arms-for-export industry. Today the Middle East is China's primary arms market, with sales totalling billions of dollars for items from assault rifles to tanks, patrol boats and aircraft.

While not the most advanced, Chinese weapons are attractively cheap and have been sold in quantities to both Iraq and Iran. The spectre of indiscriminate Chinese military supply to the Third World causes concern in the West and just before the outbreak of the Iran-Iraq crisis, the Reagan administration sent an intelligence envoy to Peking to reprimand the Chinese over arms supply to Iran. Though this issue has probably now been quietly dropped, recent developments in the Sino-Israeli relationship will not be so easily disregarded.

Although China denounces Israel as a colonialist usurper and

shuns diplomatic ties, the Chinese-Israeli commercial relationship has grown steadily over the last decade, although there has been a news blackout by both sides. But for the past two years a less cautious Chinese attitude toward public disclosure has suggested that Sino-Israeli ties are of growing value to the PRC. Less concealment probably also indicates that China considers the Arabs too divided and too preoccupied to raise the hue and cry which has accompanied past revelations of Sino-Israeli contacts.

Today the Middle East is China's primary arms market.

Taken together, a series of seemingly marginal events look rather more significant. At least two quasi-official Israeli trade delegations have visited China in the past two years and Chinese officials met secretly in Paris last April with a representative of the Israeli prime minister's office. (The latter's request for a high level meeting was rejected.) During 1986, the PRC lifted its ban on the use of Israeli passports by visitors, allowed a direct China-Israel telephone link and, according to the Israeli press, established a Hebrew language department at Peking University. No statistics are available on Sino-Israeli trade, much of which is still conducted through third parties, but here, too, there has been considerable expansion.

The reason for the relationship are obvious. China has long regarded Israel as a valuable backdoor to Western technology, civilian as well as military. In recent years, the Chinese have benefited through acquisitions of Soviet military hardware captured by the Israelis in three Middle East wars. It is generally agreed, moreover, that the Israelis have provided at least limited Western technical information to the Chinese. There are persistent rumours in the U.S. intelligence community of illegal Israeli transfers of U.S. technology, including to China — an issue of which we have not heard the last.

Last August the influential Israeli newspaper *Ha'aretz* reported visits to Peking by prominent Israeli arms salesmen and in November *The Washington Post* published a lengthy feature titled "Israel's other arms deal: selling weapons to China." According to the *Post*, "hundreds of Israelis are working in China on officially sanctioned projects" and Israel is "reliably reported" to have supplied China with military equipment including tank cannons and communications systems and to be increasingly involved in scientific, agricultural and commercial — as well as military — exchanges with the People's Republic.

Israel's motivation in seeking to further ties with China is to balance Chinese support for the Arabs and China's persistently anti-Israel stance. China was the first major power to give

the PLO diplomatic recognition and, until Soviet supply began in the late '60s, China was the Palestinian organisation's major arms supplier. Until the mid-1970s China rejected the idea of a political settlement for Palestine and called openly for destruction of Israel. By 1975, however, the PRC had begun to delete "armed" from "struggle" in its statements of support for the Palestinians. Today, although it continues to supply limited amounts of arms to the PLO, China urges the Palestinians toward a negotiated settlement.

Israel was among the first states to recognise China after birth of the PRC in 1949 and for some time Chinese responses were favourable. Since China's "turn to the Arabs" at the 1955 Bandung conference hopes for ties with China have sprung eternal in Israel, which has used an impressive series of envoys including French President Mitterrand and U.S. senator Henry Jackson to plead Israel's cause. Except during the Cultural Revolution era, the Chinese were generally willing to listen. One sign was the lucrative trade in industrial diamonds from South Africa, processed in Israel and transferred to China via Hong Kong, which had grown up by the mid-1970s.

The PRC's new, more public relationship with Israel could be a bellwether for greater Chinese political activism in the Middle East. This could include more forceful Chinese leadership in in-

ternational organisations as well as more direct involvement in international efforts to resolve disputes which do not relate directly to China. The importance of the Middle East to super-power relations and China's growing commercial involvement there enhance prospects that China will select the area as a venue for diplomatic ventures.

China has long regarded Israel as a valuable backdoor to Western technology.

Over the years China has come to recognise Israel as a regional bulwark against Soviet advances, and there has been some speculation that China might even be moving toward recognition of Israel in exchange for a role in Middle East peace negotiations. China, however, is a very cautious state and unlikely to recognise Israel officially before a general Middle East peace settlement is reached. To do so would jeopardise China's Third World authority by appearing to compromise the tenet that there can be no peace without justice for the Palestinians.

Interestingly, one key to balancing recent Israeli success with the Chinese lies with the country China considers the region's other major obstacle to Soviet inroads. Just as the Israelis have long wooed the Chinese, so China has courted Saudi Arabia

— the only Arab state with which it still has no diplomatic ties. Peking is also impressed by the Saudis' wealth, prestige among the Arabs, contacts with the West and influence over the Palestinians.

Chinese efforts to impress the Saudis that they are more than "godless communists" have included reinstitution of the *hajj* for Chinese Muslims in 1976, endorsement of Crown Prince Fahd's August 1981 peace plan, and requests that the U.S. (among others) plead the Chinese case with Riyadh. Although the Saudis have consistently refused to yield on the issue of diplomatic ties, they quietly approved Oman's establishment of relations with China in 1982 and have allowed various Saudi officials and businessmen to meet informally with the Chinese. Saudi Arabia has also become one of China's major Arab World trading partners, second only to Jordan.

As the only Third World country with a permanent seat on the U.N. Security Council, China's international clout is already considerable and could be greatly enhanced if Peking decides to "go active". Should they wish to do so, the Saudis could accelerate and perhaps turn it to their own advantage. Saudi establishment of diplomatic ties with the PRC would, at the very least, introduce an interesting new dimension into the Sino-Israeli relationship — Middle East International, London.

Soviet Union divided over Gorbachev's more open society

By Mary Ellen Bortin
Reuter

MOSCOW — Moves by Soviet Communist Party Secretary General Gorbachev to make the Soviet Union a more open society are generating increasing domestic nervousness as he completes his second year in power, Soviet and foreign analysts say.

The analysts say recent statements by Gorbachev suggest that lack of enthusiasm within Communist Party ranks for the more critical atmosphere spawned by his reforms may be forcing the 55-year-old leader to temper his liberalising spirit.

They add that a cultural thaw initiated by Gorbachev over the past year and moves such as last month's mass release of dissidents, while embraced by some Soviet intellectuals and ap-

plauded abroad, are far from unanimously approved at home. "Many people are saying this is enough," said one independent Soviet observer of internal politics.

"If we held a Western-style election today, it is not certain that Gorbachev would win a majority," he added. "Many workers are not pleased with his reforms, and there is hidden opposition within the party."

Western analysts say the extent of party resistance to Gorbachev's reforms is becoming clear through reports filtering out about a central committee plenum last January at which several speakers voiced opposition to his "glasnost" (openness) campaign.

Under "glasnost" Gorbachev has called for open criticism of factors hindering Soviet prog-

ress, including abuse of power by officials, in an effort to break with the complacency which settled over the country under previous rulers.

Well-informed sources have said some plenum speakers were applauded when they declared the press had taken "glasnost" too far, while those who backed Gorbachev, including senior Kremlin foreign policy adviser Gherasimov, faced mixed reactions.

"The feeling which emerges from the plenum is that Gorbachev received reluctant backing for the general principles of his policies," one Western analyst said.

"The lack of strong support is partly due to a feeling of nervousness among people who fear the effect of greater openness on

their authority. They're not used to being criticised, and they don't like it."

"I have the impression Gorbachev might have had to put the brakes on since the plenum," he added, citing the Kremlin leader's comment last week that he would not "rock the boat" while piloting the Soviet Union into the future.

Soviet sources say sharp internal debate is also continuing over moves by Gorbachev to liberalise the arts through publication of previously banned works, an easing of censorship and greater democracy in the cinema and theatre.

They cite delays in releasing works such as the Georgian film "Repentance" on the Stalin era, and fierce opposition to novels such as "Children of the Arbat," a still unpublished depiction of

Stalin's terror by author Anatoly Rybakov.

But they say the cultural thaw has drawn many intellectuals to Gorbachev's camp after initially catching them by surprise.

"When Gorbachev came to power in March 1985, many thought of him chiefly as an economic reformer," a Soviet analyst said.

"Things began changing for intellectuals after the party congress last spring, with the staging of some critical plays during the summer, the publication of controversial novels and the growing 'glasnost' campaign in the press."

The relaxation of constraints on expression has provided support for Gorbachev from prominent cultural figures, such as the former "Angry Young Poets"

Yevgeny Yevushenko and Andrei Vosnesensky, or the playwright Mikhail Shatrov.

Soviet sources say Gorbachev has also received important backing from intellectuals in science and technology who hope his reforms will lead to increased scientific contacts with the West.

Soviet analysts said Gorbachev had effectively headed off a possible revival of the dissident movement of the 1970s by associating leading intellectuals with his reform drive and depriving political dissenters of a prominent figurehead.

"Today major figures are trying to get involved in the new official policy on culture," one said. "But the dissident movement can be reform if the liberalisation process stops and current leaders are replaced with more conservative groups."

Burma still battles its insurgents

Burma suffers from an over-abundance of insurgent groups. The Financial Times Rangoon correspondent charts their bloody paths over the recent past.

BURMA's supreme leader retired general Ne Win once quipped that if he were asked to name a country with the biggest collection of diverse insurgent groups, he would certainly name Burma. Although spoken in a jocular mood, his words served to highlight the sad fact that this country of 37 million people has been plagued by insurgents of various political hues since it became independent 39 years ago.

The situation has improved greatly over the years, but the recent fighting in north-east Burma between Burmese Communists and government troops shows that the problem is far from over.

The latest offensive was launched on November 6 with a surprise attack on a military outpost at Hsi Hsi Wan, a mountain hamlet 15 miles south of Kyaukse on the Sino-Burmese border. The Burmese Communist Party (BCP) fielded some 1,500 men, deploying them in units of about 100 each for simultaneous assaults on eight other government outposts on hilltops in the vicinity.

By January 6, government troops had recaptured all the outposts and Kyaukse, which had been held for 16 years by BCP bands for 16 years. By January 11, government troops had also recaptured the narrow border along the Sino-Burmese border, stretching north-east from Namkham to Muse, which had been held by the BCP since 1968. Fighting continued and BCP casualties have so far totalled 598 dead against 175 troops.

The BCP is the only organisation which can pose a credible confrontation with the government. But it has damaged its image by an appalling record of violence and cruelty and acts of sacrilege to Buddhist institutions. It moved to north-east Burma in 1968 after a period of regrouping and began operations from there against government targets, starting with the 1970 offensive in which it captured Kyaukse. It mounted similar offensives in 1971, 1973 and 1977, with apparently disastrous results. Its aim has always been to carve out a fairly large "liberated zone" in

the border area from which to extend its operations southwards to Mandalay, Burma's former imperial city 400 miles north of Rangoon.

The latest government reports say the BCP is in financial trouble because the flow of aid from the Chinese Communist Party has dried up. It has taken up opium and jade smuggling in order to supply the money to buy firearms and medical supplies after a decision at the BCP congress held in mid-1986 at Panghsang, the border town where the BCP has set up its new headquarters.

The jade trade is conducted in collaboration with the ethnic rebel group the Kachin Independence Army (KIA) and the opium trade with another ethnic group, the Shan State Army (SSA). The decision also called for secret operation of two opium refineries — one at Panghsang and the other in the Kokang area in the east — for production and sale of heroin.

The BCP has ignored offers of amnesty proclaimed by the government from time to time, but has held peace talks with the government twice, in 1963 and 1981, without success. On the second occasion it made three demands as a condition for peace: That it be allowed to continue as a lawful political party in Burma, that its armed forces be allowed to remain intact, and that the border regions under its occupation be treated as its base area. Effectively, it was a demand for a rival BCP government, with its own army and territory, which was destined for rejection.

Next to the BCP, the Karen National Union (KNU), demanding an independent Karen state, has been the most active of the insurgent groups, operating from bases in south-east Burma. Since 1983, when Karen insurgents kidnapped a French technician and his wife from a cement plant in south Burma, the government has stepped up counter-insurgency operations in the area, with the result that troops seized a lucrative KNU tollgate on the Burma-Thailand overland smuggling route.

New accents in the orientation of Socialist International

By Petar Boskovic

THE parties of the Socialist International, the Socialist and Social Democrats, have for several years been engaged in an intensified search for a socio-economic development strategy which would ensure stable socio-economic development, high employment without inflation and an inevitable change in production structure by finding answers to the major challenges facing every modern society due to technological progress. These efforts came to expression at the 17th congress of Socialist International in Lima towards the middle of '86 and in its adopted documents: "Global Challenge" and "Manifesto". These documents as well as the earlier act, "Way out of the Crisis", launched by Socialist International parties in western Europe indicate that views among the ranks of this organisation have changed as regards certain major global problems. This is further indicated by the new draft programme of the Socialist Democratic Party of West Germany, one of the leading members of Socialist International.

Another reason why the new accents in the orientation of this international association of socialist and social democratic parties are significant is that the members of Socialist International represent the majority of the working class in the OECD countries. Another important thing is that not so long ago these parties and Socialist International itself had completely different stands on some of the questions just debated.

Towards the end of the seventies, the British Labour Party and the Social Democratic Party of West Germany, faced with the growing expenditures of the welfare state, increased unemployment and the formidable challenges of technological development, tacitly opened the doors to a monetaristic approach in resolving socio-economic problems. Callaghan in Britain and Schmidt in West Germany now took over power from the conservative neo-liberalistic forces.

Having learned from their own experience and the experience of affiliated parties in Europe and other parts of the world the par-

ties of Socialist International are today seeking a different way to resolve the economic crisis, to cope with major global development problems, disarmament, environmental protection and other unsettled international issues, and this certainly deserves the attention of the world's progressive and democratic forces. One of the rare exceptions is the Socialist Workers' Party of Spain (PSOE) which managed to remain in power adhering to a centralistic socio-economic strategy. Although halfway through their term of office, the French socialists have lost power, giving way to the pressure of the conservative right in and outside the country and accepting some options of the monetaristic approach which produced visible economic results. This however does not detract from, but on the contrary enhances the importance of new accents in Socialist and Social Democrats' quest for new development approaches and roads.

The conclusions which may be drawn from the Lima documents regarding the character of the crisis and ways and means for weathering it are certainly noteworthy. These documents state that the present world economic crisis is both cyclic but also structural by nature. The way out of the crisis is therefore viewed on a global scale which is at variance with the present neo-liberalistic approach advocated by the conservative right wing forces. In other words the recovery and restructuring of the economy of the developed north cannot be effected divorced from conditions in the south. Nor can this be achieved by infringing upon the achievements of the welfare state in the developed countries, and even less by shifting the burden of the crisis to the developing countries, thus checking their socio-economic development in order to meet their financial liabilities towards the developed countries. This approach has considerable significance for it largely coincides with the demands of the developing countries as voiced at the 8th Non-aligned Summit in Harare.

Resistance to neoliberalism is also noteworthy from the standpoint of the communist parties,

especially those in power. These parties having for many years ignored fundamental economic laws, are now obliged to rehabilitate certain important segments of real economy, which at a first glance has put them in the paradoxical situation of advocating the concept of the neo-liberalists, although actually they too are seeking answers to the challenges of contemporary socio-economic development and the accelerated technological revolution. The parties of Socialist International are free of such a burden for most of them operate under market economy conditions, so that their opposition to neo-liberalism is all the more noteworthy.

The parties of Socialist International are becoming increasingly aware that there can be no radical socio-economic changes in one country alone in view of the high concentration of financial and industrial capital via multinational corporations and financial establishments. They are therefore drawn to enhanced mutual cooperation and solidarity, one of the essential guidelines of socialism.

Most of the members of Socialist International are striving for a reform of the world monetary system, convening an international conference of debtors and creditors, for the debtor countries' payment of debts while safeguarding their development and strengthening internal social consumption, for a reform of international economic relations, for stable raw material prices, for the introduction of a system of compensations and preferential for the developing countries, for more stringent control of the transactions of multinational corporations in the developing countries, for promoting multilateral forms of negotiation and assistance, for the relocation of global demand from the north to the south and for a general readjustment of north-south relations. All these are stands which deserve the fullest attention and support.

The problems of the struggle for peace are very naturally closely connected with the establishment of global development equilibrium, with special reference to environmental protection on a world-wide scale. It has been pointed out with every justification that the world's global inter-

dependence is most completely reflected in the need to protect human environment which knows no national, ideological or geographical frontiers.

Some of the parties of Socialist International operate in NATO member states and favour the preservation of this military political alliance. However all members of Socialist International consider that SI should have a strictly defensive role and they are against any attempt to expand its competence. A priority task is initiating the process of disarmament, particularly the elimination of nuclear and all other weapons for mass destruction. Most of the parties of Socialist International explicitly opposed the arms race spreading to include outer space, convinced that peace-minded partnership with the socialist countries cannot be built up under conditions of an escalating arms race and striving for military supremacy, but only under conditions of détente.

The west European members of Socialist International are more and more visibly inclined to strengthen the independence of western Europe, especially within the framework of the EEC, but not exclusively so. As to security, these parties advocate relinquishing the "deterrent" doctrine and the balance of fear in favour of a doctrine of collective security for one and all. Socialist International members in western Europe, but also in other parts of the world, are making it increasingly clear that they are against either superpower striving to attain military supremacy.

The opposition to conservative tendencies on the socio-economic plane, both internal and international and notable orientation towards resolving crucial world problems deserve due attention and support. It is to be hoped they will become prevalent frame of mind in the member countries of Socialist International, for today this is not yet the case.

The range of the strategy for which the parties of Socialist International have opted will be put to the test in practice. However one should not underestimate the possibilities this orientation opens up in transcending the historic split in the workers' movement through cooperation in resolving acute world problems — Review of International Affairs, Belgrade.

Motoring's contribution to the swinging sixties alive and well

By Chris Peterson
 Reuters

LONDON — The mini is alive and well and reports of the death of British Motoring's contribution to the swinging 60's are premature.

Over 27 years since it first burst onto the motoring scene with its revolutionary transverse engine, box-shaped body and front-wheel drive, the Mini is enjoying a new lease of life, according to its manufacturers.

Graham Day, who took over as Austin Rover's chairman and chief executive in May last year, said last week he had been horrified to learn that there were plans to scrap the Mini this year, which he had stopped. I received literally hundreds of letters. Some people actually ask me where they can find a second-hand Mini. I tell them we are still making them," he said.

There have been many imitations since and sales of the car whose name inspired some of the briefest skirts ever seen on a human being have topped the five million.

But despite its cramped interior, odd driving position — once described as like being in a London bus at ground level — and distinctly outdated looks, the demand is still strong enough for Austin Rover to turn out between 500 and 650 vehicles a week at its Longbridge plant in Britain's industrial Midlands.

The Mini represents for Britain's Motor industry what Volkswagen's external Beetle — over 20 million made in just under 40 years — means to West Germany and Citroën's 2CV, still in production, means to France.

Not that the car, which now retails at around £3,800 (\$5,700), makes much money for Austin Rover.

"Although it is comparatively cheaper than when it first went on sale and we have long since paid off the development costs, there's not a big profit margin on the car," an Austin Rover spokesman said.

"Frankly the real benefit is the image — if we were to stop making it, there would be an outcry," he added.

While the car is now considered a "must" for some women

in Paris, and has become a cult in Japan — home of the inexpensive automobile — the Mini is no stranger to fashion.

Its appearance in 1959 coincided with the swinging 60's, the period when London was the centre of a liberated lifestyle and the Mini played a central role.

Aspiring hippies painted flowers all over it. Youngsters barely out of their teens bolted on wide wheels, a straight-through ex-

haust system, an impossible array of spotlights and pretended they were winning the Monte Carlo Rally.

Various versions appeared, from the basic 850 cc model to the luxury radford conversion, with leather seats, a walnut dashboard, electric windows and a price tag to match.

Ironically the Mini's biggest failure could have been its biggest success. A jeep-like version cal-

led the Mini-moke, with a canvas top and the bare minimum of equipment, failed to excite the farming community it was aimed at, simply because of its low ground clearance.

But the trendy crowds thronging the king's road in the chic west London area of Chelsea soon snapped it up and there was an outcry when British Leyland, as the company then was, stopped making it. A buyer would be

lucky to find one for £1,500 (\$2,280) these days.

The Mini even attracted the ultimate 1960's tribute — three hot-rod Mini-coopers starred in a film called "The Italian Job," with two human co-stars called Michael Caine and Noel Coward trying hard not to be upstaged.

The 1960's and 70's saw another craze — how many people could squeeze into a Mini. According to researchers at the Guinness book of records, 33 students from a London school managed to pack themselves into a car designed to hold four adults at the most in 1970.

In later years Austin Rover did not even bother to advertise Britain's best-selling mass produced car — over five million sold in 27 years.

When we did start a limited advertising campaign just before Christmas, sales shot up. Sales in France last year were 6,719, an increase of 15 per cent. In Japan it has become a cult car — "we actually sold 2,280 there last year, a 100 per cent increase on the year before," said the Austin Rover spokesman.

The Mini itself has a confused parentage. Its designer, Alec Issigonis, was working for the British Motor Corporation (BMC), when it first saw the light of day.

But in a series of name changes the Mini's parents were successively British Leyland, BL and now Austin Rover.

One group didn't outlast the Mini. Graham Day recently told BBC radio that the Mini's life would be extended well into 1991.

Asked what had happened to the management team who had recommended its demise, there was the barest pause before he said: "They no longer work for the company."



Herbalists face lean times with switch to modern medicine

By Fouad Gawhari
 Reuters

BAHRAIN — Herbalists, working from the narrow, winding alleyways of traditional Arab markets, say they are facing lean times because their clients are switching to modern medicines.

Instead of potions made of boiled roots, grasses, spices and animal parts, customers want antibiotics and other medicines, both prescribed and non-prescribed, from pharmacies.

This change in attitude developed from the fact that the Gulf states have the most advanced medical services in the Middle East.

"In the past, a *hawaj* (herbalist) shop was like a pharmacy teeming with clients, but now we only get a very few," lamented Jassem Bin Ibrahim from Qatar.

In Abu Dhabi, 70-year-old Muhammad Abdullah, one of the very few herbalists left in the emirate, said his business was steadily declining and he was now engaged in general trade as well as herbs.

"I can't make a living just selling herbs anymore," he told Reuters. "Few people use herbs nowadays."

Bahrain's Haji Joma Ahmed Al Kanguni said his business had fallen off from the past when clients used to pack his shop seeking remedies.

However, Kanguni, at 68 one of the oldest herbalists in the island state, said a number of recipes, mostly sex potions, remain in demand, especially for those over 50.

One is his own recipe, which he calls the "Kanguni formula,"

composed of eight herbs which he claims is very effective as an aphrodisiac.

"The composition is a secret but I can tell you nutmeg powder is one ingredient," a grinning Kanguni said.

Another libido stimulant is ambergis, a waxlike, odiferous substance found in the intestines of the sperm whale and widely used in the manufacture of the best perfumes.

"A fragment of the stuff in a glass of milk before going to bed for two weeks does it," said Kanguni, who has three wives and 12 children.

But not many people can afford it as nine grammes costs about \$150 he added.

Other potions are supposed to be able to erase face wrinkles, rejuvenate the muscles, end headaches and strengthen weak hearts.

Heaping praise on his wares, Kanguni said a mixture of belba (fenugreek) and rashad (garden peppergrass seeds) is used as a tonic for women in childbirth.

Al majmou'ah (the collection), a blended brew of 12 herbs, is good for gastric and digestive problems. Another potion, called *saur al-deck* (cock's comb), is used for children's abdominal pain.

Boiled camomom (cumin) and yansoun (aniseed) relieve intestinal trouble.

"These are cures endowed by nature and better than chemical-treated ingredients," Kanguni said, but his shop was empty while a pharmacy nearby was crowded with Bahrainis buying modern medicines.

Egyptian government approves startup of American quest for ancient air

By Mimi Mann
 The Associated Press

GIZA, Egypt — American and Egyptian scientists are preparing to probe a 4,600-year-old time tunnel, a sealed underground pit in the shadow of the Great Pyramid of Cheops.

In a season of major scientific missions atop Giza plateau, the new effort is the most venturesome, marshaling technology used on the moon.

Financed mainly by the Washington-based National Geographic Society, the project has received an initial go-ahead from the Egyptian antiquities organisation. Organisers plan to begin preliminary work in the spring and return in the fall.

They have two goals: — To bottle for analysis air trapped when Old Kingdom workmen fitted massive limestone slabs on top of the pit and sealed them with gypsum plaster. — To insert a tiny camera into the pit and take a peek into the unopened chamber.

After these two steps, the scientists plan to withdraw without unsealing the pit. They want to leave the ancient chamber the same way they found it.

"Nothing from our atmosphere will disturb the moment of time when the pit was sealed," said Egyptian-born American Farouk Al Baz, director of Boston University's centre for remote sensing.

Al Baz, a scientist with the U.S. space programme is coordinating the mission on the American side.

In January, Japanese technicians with ground-scanning radar detected tantalising signs that artifacts might have survived inside the pit, the only one of Cheops' five so-called boat pits still to be uncovered.

Three neighbouring pits were discovered empty, but, early in 1954, workmen clearing rubble next to Cheops found side-by-side pits 18.5 metres from the pyramid's southern face.

The first pit yielded a dismantled royal ship 43.5 metres long. Gingerly laid out, it nevertheless broke into 1,224 pieces and required 10 years for reconstruction. What emerged was a magnificent craft, the largest and best-preserved boat known to have survived from the ancient world. Made of Lebanese cedar, its rope-stitched beams were curved into an imitation of a raft made of bundled papyrus.

Egyptologists debate whether the craft ever sailed on the Nile, whether it might have ferried Cheops' body to final death rites, or whether it was a vehicle for the dead king's continual journey through the afterlife.

In ancient Egypt's sun cult, two boats would have been required for that journey, one to cross the horizon in the daytime, and another to enter and exit the

underworld of the night.

One explanation for the twin pits is that the boat from the first represents the solar journey and that from the still-sealed pit contains a nocturnal vessel, possibly with artifacts to protect the Pharaoh from the perils of the night.

During 30 years of working with earth and planetary geology, Al Baz became convinced the technology he was using for the Apollo-Soyuz mission and the Apollo lunar landings could be adapted to archaeology. Egyptian authorities agreed to let him try.

Two years have already been spent on the project. Al Baz and National Geographic Society experts have constructed a mockup of Giza plateau to rehearse the effort "so that every step will be correct," he said.

Al Baz said the project begins in April with surveys of the pit using higher resolution ground-scanning radar than that used by the Japanese, which registered three columns of various materials in the pit. In September or October, the retainer wall just above the pit will be removed, Al Baz said.

Omar Al Arini, Egyptian coordinator on the project, said radar readings must show the best entry point through the limestone and the contours of the pit. "We must avoid hitting any (of its) contents with the drill," he said.

The 41 slabs covering the first pit were sealed by liquid gypsum plaster poured between and around the blocks. The second pit's construction appears similar, but the covering slabs remain covered by desert sand.

To penetrate the pit without disturbing its environment, the team will use a drill similar to one that took core samples on the moon. No water, oil or air will be introduced, and no heat or vibrations will be generated when the drill with a special sealer bores downward, Al Baz said.

Environmental monitoring sensors will record temperature, pressure, humidity and any exchange of air between the rock of the pit and the outside world, he said.

Several samples of air, to be analysed by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration in Boulder, Colorado, will be sucked into specially designed bottles similar to those used in NASA's space shuttle programme.

From the air samples, scientists hope to learn to recreate atmospheric conditions that could be used to preserve other threatened antiquities — such as the boat excavated from the first pit.

After the air samples are taken, Al Baz said, cameras developed by National Geographic will be inserted in the pit for digital photos and television images. "We'll take photos and reread the pit as if nothing happened," he said.

The Third World baby racket

'Beirut newspapers advertise children for sale'

By Radhakrishna Rao

BANGALORE, India — From Lebanon in the Middle East to Malaysia in South East Asia, trading in innocent babies has become a booming multi-million dollar business. Every day, thousands of infants are bought and sold in various parts of Asia, with a professional expertise more usually associated with a commodity market or a stock exchange.

Depending on the mood of the buyers and the prevailing economic conditions, the price of babies being offered for sale fluctuates wildly. But the eagerness of childless couples in North America and Europe to have a family, added to the shortage of babies available for adoption in those countries, means that the market for Third World children is brisk.

In some parts of the world, the baby trade is quite blatant. Newspapers in Beirut have started carrying advertisements offering children for sale. One recent example in the daily Al Nahar read: "For sale — eight children. I Ahmad Badr Tawashib from Kibbeh offer my eight under-age children for the price of getting them out of Lebanon and giving them the basic necessities of life."

This apparently brought responses from as far away as Cairo and Dubai. It is not an isolated case, and is just one manifestation of the social and economic tensions in strife-torn Lebanon.

Selling children can be found

further East too. Recently, police in Sri Lanka busted a gang involved in baby-trading. Four people were arrested in the rather respectable southern town of Galle. They consisted of a matron, a broker and two accomplices, who would buy babies from mothers tempted either by monetary gain or wanting to avoid the shame of looking after an illegitimate child.

The broker arrested in Galle confessed that he went round villages, estate areas and maternity wards, scouting for pregnant women. Mothers-to-be who agreed to sell their babies were paid some money in advance, with the balance due when they banded them over after birth. The matron then took care of these infants in safe houses in Colombo. Once legal formalities were completed, foreign foster parents who had gone to Sri Lanka specially — the overwhelming majority from the United States, Sweden or West Germany — would take the babies away with them.

During 1986, at least 200 babies were also flown out of Sri Lanka by foreign agencies working hand-in-glove with local brokers, according to the Sri Lankan Ministry of Social Welfare. The ministry alleges that over the past few months there have been efforts to send pregnant women abroad for their delivery, to try to evade a government clamp-down.

During the 1970s, more than 10,000 Sri Lankan babies are

believed to have been sold abroad. Of these, about 7,000 reportedly went to Sweden. Childless couples in the West are willing to pay as much as \$4,000 a child to the Sri Lankan brokers. Yet out of this, the natural mother may receive as little as \$35, a thermos flask and a piece of cloth.

India is another country from which hundreds of unwanted babies make their way to new homes in the USA or Western Europe. Every day, at least half a dozen newborn children from the slums of Calcutta or the maternity bames of New Delhi are allocated to foster parents abroad. A couple of years ago, there was an outcry in India over the way that an adoption agency based in Atlanta, Georgia, had involved itself in this baby-smuggling scheme.

The agency was said to have employed off-duty airline crews, mainly from U.S. carriers, to escort the children, using their staff discounts. Thus the agents were able to cut their operational costs considerably. A clinic run by a woman who previously worked as a field nurse in the Vietnam war, played a key role in the child-running. She maintained that all the babies that ended up in the clinic had been abandoned by their mothers.

In Malaysia, baby-trading has become a highly sophisticated and at times utterly crooked racket. Well-organised syndicates in the capital Kuala Lumpur and

other towns smuggle babies in from neighbouring Thailand. Most of these children are born to Thai parents or Kampuchean refugees, who are too poor to bring them up themselves. At times these syndicates also sell illegitimate children.

But there have been instances of members of these syndicates cheating some unwary foreign couples by collecting the agreed fee in advance and then disappearing without producing a child. The cheated couples usually do not dare report the matter to the police, as they know this could land them in trouble themselves.

However, the police in Malaysia have recorded some successes in combating the trade. Last year, they stumbled across an operation at Pandamaran, about 50 kilometres from Kuala Lumpur. Two women — a midwife and her accomplice — were taken into custody. At their trial, they confessed to having sold a hundred babies to childless couples. The police were ultimately able to recover just over half of these.

Under Malaysian law, people caught selling babies can be imprisoned for a period of five years, made to pay a large fine or both. But police say that it is often difficult to prosecute the operators, as the couples who have bought children from them refuse to give evidence as they fear they will subsequently have to give up the babies — Earthen feature.

Scientists explore therapeutic values of body wastes

By Warren E. Leary
 The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Some chemical wastes of the body, the leftovers of the millions of daily reactions that power the process of life, may have beneficial uses that belie their image as mere garbage, scientists say.

The yellowing dye responsible for jaundice, long dismissed as a valueless bodily waste, appears to have a beneficial function that can lessen tissue damage in cancer, aging, inflammation and heart disease, they have said.

Test tube studies indicate the bile pigment called bilirubin, which yellows the skin, is a powerful antioxidant of oxygen compounds that play a role in numerous diseases and conditions.

Scientists from the University of California's Berkeley and San Francisco campuses say the results provide further evidence that scientists should look at other "wastes" from the chemical processes in the body to see if they also have other functions.

Previous work from the same scientists suggests that uric acid, another chemical end product, may serve as a protective agent in blood plasma. The tests with bilirubin were designed to test a hypothesis posed by one of the researchers, Dr. Alexander N. Glazer, that some metabolic by-products may play roles as protective agents.

"From its chemical properties, we know that bilirubin has characteristics that haven't been described yet," Roland Stocker, a post doctoral fellow who lead the bilirubin study, said in a telephone interview.

"Instead of spending 95 per cent of our time developing means to get rid of bilirubin, we should spend time on possible beneficial roles of bilirubin," Stocker said.

When tested with simulated cell-surface membranes kept under conditions similar to those found in the liver, the main organ that processes bilirubin, the compound proved to be as effective an antioxidant as the most active ingredient in vitamin E, the scientists found.

Reactive oxygen compounds, oxidants, initiate chemical processes that alter cell membranes and damage membrane-bound enzymes. They have been implicated in causing or aiding the progress of cancer, aging, heart disease, chronic inflammations and various infectious, the report said.

Humans, animals and other organisms have a complex line of antioxidant defenses to prevent the formation of oxidants and repair tissues damaged by them. It remains to be proven if bilirubin is part of this defense in humans, as indicated in the laboratory work, the researchers said.

When haemoglobin, the oxygen-carrying blood protein, breaks down, it produces a compound called biliverdin. This substance then converts to bilirubin, a yellowish pigment taken up by the liver and excreted into bile.

Jaundice results from bilirubin concentrating in the body, often because of a liver malfunction or hepatitis, and this can lead to brain inflammation and other complications, particularly in infants.

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Jordan, China sign accord to build sports city in Irbid

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordan and China Tuesday signed an agreement for the construction of the Al Hassan Sports City in Irbid at the cost of JD 7.1 million to be partly covered by a Chinese loan.

The agreement, signed by Minister of Public Works Mahmoud Al Hawamdeh and China's ambassador to Jordan, Chang Jin, provides for the Jordanian treasury to cover JD 2.4 million of the project's cost, while the rest, JD 4.7 million, will be covered by a loan from the Chinese government.

Jordan will pay back the loan in five years time starting in 1994; half of the loan will be repaid in the form of Jordanian industrial products, according to the terms of the agreement.

Following the signing ceremony, which took place at the Ministry of Public Works, Mr. Hawamdeh said the agreement is in implementation of an understanding reached between the two sides during a visit by the Chinese President Li Xianlian to Jordan in 1984. The agreement is a part of the two countries joint endeavour to promote bilateral cooperation, the minister noted.

The design for the sports city project, which was prepared by Chinese architects has been revised and approved by the Ministry of Public Works, the Ministry

of Youth, and the Municipality of Irbid. China will contribute to the construction of the project which is expected to take 30 months to complete, the minister pointed out.

The project will be built on a 100 dunam plot of land, of which the buildings and other installations will take up 25,000 square metres, the minister continued.



Minister of Public Works Mahmoud Al Hawamdeh (left) and China's ambassador to Jordan, Chang Jin (right), sign agreement Tuesday for construction of Al Hassan Sports City in Irbid (Petra photo)

He said that the sports city will include a gymnasium hall seating 2,000 people, an Olympic stadium accommodating at least 15,000 spectators, a training hall for basketball, volleyball and badminton, and swimming pools, and essential services.

According to the minister, work on the project will start in the coming three months.

At the ceremony, the Chinese ambassador made a speech reviewing Jordanian-Chinese relations in various fields and called for a strengthening of bilateral cooperation.

Edberg beats Curren, thunderstorm to advance in int'l players tourney

KEY BISCAYNE, Florida (AP) — As has become his habit, second-seeded Stefan Edberg of Sweden created very little fanfare on his way to the quarterfinals of the International Players Championships with a 7-5, 6-3, 6-4 victory over Kevin Curren.

Edberg, playing the first match of the day on the stadium court, finished off Curren in 93 minutes and was in the locker room before most of the traditionally late-arriving crowd had set foot on the International Tennis Centre grounds.

The fans were the real losers, however, as only one other singles match was completed before thunderstorms forced cancellation of play. In that match, ninth-seeded Claudia Kohde-Kilsch of West Germany dominated the final set to beat seventh-seeded Zina Garrison 6-4, 4-6, 6-1 and reach the women's quarterfinals.

Three other singles matches were underway when the rains came, with fourth-seeded Yannick Noah of France leading Johan Kriek 4-6, 6-3, 5-3 and Slobodan Zivojnovic of Yugoslavia ahead of ninth-seeded Miloslav Mecir 6-2, 0-3. In a women's round of 16 contest, sixth-seeded Helena Sukova of Czechoslovakia was ahead 5-7, 7-5, 3-2 over 13th-seeded Lori McNeil.

Also postponed were matches which featured top-seeded Ivan Lendl against 16th-seeded Brad Gilbert and Stephanie Rehe against third-seeded Chris Evert Lloyd.

Edberg had no idea the rain was on the way, but he wasted no time with Curren.

"I don't think I can play any better than that," he said. "Today is the first match of this tournament I've played very well."

Edberg, who has dropped only one set in four matches here, has been playing his best tennis in recent months. He won the Australian Open and the U.S. Indoor before losing to Boris Becker of West Germany in the finals of the Pilot Pen Classic last month.

"I'm more confident than I was a year ago," said Edberg, who dropped behind Becker to no. 3 in the rankings last week. "I'm a little bit quicker. And I'm playing more carefully, not taking as

many chances."

Although he has won the Australian Open twice, Edberg hasn't attracted much attention because he has been in only one other Grand Slam semifinal — at the U.S. Open last year.

"The three majors are the French, Wimbledon and the U.S. Open and that's where you get the publicity," said the soft-spoken Swede. "If I win there, the publicity will come, but I'm not worried about it."

Kohde-Kilsch has been ranked as high as no. 4 in the world in 1985, but she has slipped to eighth in recent months. Garrison is one of those who slipped past her in the computer list, but the Houston native can't seem to beat Kohde-Kilsch on the court.

Monday's victory was the third straight for Kohde-Kilsch over Garrison.

"Since she changed her game and started coming in more, I beat her," said Kohde-Kilsch. "Before that, she beat me five times in a row. I don't know why it is. She seems to be comfortable coming in and it works against most people."

British court holds Heyssel fans pending extradition

LONDON (R) — A British court ordered 26 soccer fans detained pending a decision on their extradition to Belgium after accepting there was evidence of their role in rioting that led to 39 deaths at Brussels' Heysel Stadium in 1985.

Magistrate David Hopkin said Tuesday that there was sufficient evidence that all 26 took part in unlawful acts, either charging, throwing missiles or fighting in a riot before the 1985 European Cup final between Liverpool and Italian champion Juventus.

A final decision on whether the fans should be extradited to face manslaughter charges in Belgium rests with Home Secretary (interior minister) Douglas Hurd. Lawyers for the 26 appealed against the judgement.

Most of those killed in the riot were Italians. Many were crushed under a wall which collapsed as panic-stricken fans tried to flee a charge by Liverpool supporters.

The 26 suspects were identified after painstaking analysis of television film and police videos. The event took place in front of a huge live, television audience which had tuned in for Europe's top soccer encounter.

English clubs were banned indefinitely from European competitions following the riot.

Paris-Peking race heads for Dhaka

ABU DHABI (R) — Seventeen light aircraft buzzed into the hot desert air over the Gulf emirate of Abu Dhabi Tuesday and throtled up across the Arabian Sea towards Dhaka on the second leg of a race to Peking.

The air rally, billed by organisers as the longest race of any kind ever held, covers 35,000 kilometres from Paris to Peking and back.

The leader after the first leg was a Franco-Swiss team led by captain Francois Garcon in a Piper Malibu.

The planes were due to reach Bangladesh from 0600 local time Wednesday after crossing India and Pakistan.

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Rockets hold off challenge by Spurs

SAN ANTONIO (AP) — The Houston Rockets were clinging to a 100-98 lead when San Antonio's Alvin Robertson whipped a pass to Artis Gilmore. But with Akeem Olajuwon on one side and Robert Reid on the other, the only way Gilmore could get to the ball was to foul.

Reid canned two free throws with 12 seconds remaining and Houston knocked off the Spurs 105-100 for its fifth triumph in as many meetings this season.

Olajuwon led the way for Houston with 32 points and Reid had 21. For San Antonio, Alvin Robertson scored 26 and Mike Mitchell 20.

Mavericks 135, Suns 112. Deals won at home for the fifth straight time by drubbing Phoenix. The Mavericks are 25-3 at Reunion Arena.

The Mavericks never trailed against Phoenix and led by 33 points late in the third quarter. Meanwhile, Phoenix lost its seventh consecutive game and

second straight under interim coach Dick Van Arsdale, who replaced the fired John MacLeod last Thursday.

Larry Nance led the Suns with 25 points. James Donaldson had 22 points and Mark Aguirre 21 for Dallas.

Hawks 121, Bulls 99. Kevin Willis scored 26 points and grabbed 17 rebounds as Atlanta stretched its winning streak to three games and climbed with 1½ games of first-place Detroit in the Central Division.

The Hawks, who were led by Dominique Wilkins' 33 points, blew a 13 point lead in the second period, then pulled away again in the third quarter behind Randy Wittman's 12 points. An 8-0 run late in the period, capped by Wilkins' layup with 3:21 left, extended the margin to 84-66.

Jeff Malone had 22 points for Washington.

Kings 117, Nuggets 114. Mark Olberding hit all 13 of his free throws and scored a season-

high 21 points as Sacramento defeated Denver.

The Kings got 24 points each from Eddie Johnson and Otis Thorpe, who also had 15 rebounds, and 23 from Reggie Theus in handing Denver its 10th loss in the last 12 games.

Darrell Walker sparked Denver off the bench with 20 points. Alex English had 26 and Lafayette Levers 15 points, plus 16 rebounds and 10 assists, his 13th "triple double" of the season.

Supersonics 123, Cavaliers 107.

Seattle's Tom Chambers scored 36 points, including six in a row to defuse a fourth-quarter Cleveland rally, as the Sonics won their third straight game. Cleveland was led by its rookie, triumnvirate as John L. Williams and Brad Daugherty each scored 25 points and Ron Harper added 20. Xavier McDaniel had 19 for the Sonics while Alton Lister grabbed 21 rebounds and Nate McMillan contributed 16 assists.

N. Korea ups demands

TOKYO (AP) — North Korea insisted that eight of the 23 events in the 1988 Olympics should be moved from South Korea to the North Korean capital of Pyongyang.

Chin Chung Guk, vice chairman of the North Korean Olympic Committee, told a news conference Tuesday in Pyongyang, however, that the North was not rejecting the International Olympic Committee's proposal to stage two events in the North, Pyongyang's official Korean central news agency reported.

The agency, monitored in Tokyo, said Chin explained that the North agreed to hold table tennis and archery as proposed.

But he added that two events are not enough, and that "our side should host one-third (of the 23 events) in view of the population proportion in the North and the South."

The IOC also proposed that preliminary soccer matches and a cycling road race could be held in the North.

IOC President Juan Antonio Samaranch said last month after talks with a North Korean delegation in Lausanne, Switzerland: "I think the offer is a very generous proposal, a historic one."

Warm weather threatens to spoil '88 Winter Games in Calgary

By John Korobanik
Associated Press

CALGARY, Alberta — A year before the start of the 1988 Winter Olympic Games, some people in the host city of Calgary are spending their winter playing golf.

If there's one uncontrollable concern facing the Calgary Olympic Organising Committee, it's the warmth of recent Alberta winters. Instead of cold and white with snow, Calgary this winter has been warm and brown.

Less than an hour's drive away, the snow-covered peaks of the Rocky Mountains tease the committee. But the lack of snow was a problem this winter, interfering with, but not cancelling, pre-Olympic events held to test about \$188 million worth of facilities for the Games.

Only last December, Calgary's coordinator of Alpine events, Bill Wearmouth, said that "snow is not a problem anymore" at Mount Allan.

"The only thing that could kill it is the biggest Chinook (wind) in 50 years, or rain, and it never rains here in December," he said.

His words came back to haunt him.

The Calgary region began experiencing above-normal temperatures almost immediately after Wearmouth made his prediction. December's average mean temperature was 40 degrees, and January was the fourth mildest since 1883.

Calgary received less than 3.8 centimetres of snow in January, well below the average of 20 centimetres. Where there normally would be knee-high snow, there wasn't enough for a good snowball fight.

Weather officials, reluctant to make any kind of prediction about next winter, concede that Calgary winters have been getting increasingly milder and drier for five years.

An environment official said it was difficult to say what has been

SPORTS IN BRIEF

Jordan to host Arab soccer tourney

AMMAN (R) — Elimination matches for the Arab soccer club championship will be held in Jordan in June, a soccer official said Tuesday. Teams from Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine and Syria would take part, said Mohammed Jamil Abdul Qader, secretary general of the Jordan Football Federation. He told Reuters the matches would be organised by the Al Faisali club, the 1986 Jordanian Honour League champion. He also said Jordan would host the 1988 finals of the Arab Cup between 10 teams from five Arab geographical groups.

Watford beats Walsall in FA Cup

WALSALL, England (AP) — Andy Dorman's shot into his own goal gave Watford a 1-0 victory over Walsall in a fifth-round second replay in the FA Cup, ending the Third Division club's hopes of glory in English soccer's top knockout competition. Watford will play in the quarterfinals against another First Division team, Arsenal. The mistake by Dorman came in the 27th minute of the match Monday night at Walsall's fellow park ground, jammed with a capacity 16,000 fans. Watford winger John Barnes appeared trapped near the corner flag but worked his way down the endline and drove a swinging, knee-high cross toward teammate Luther Blissett. Walsall goalkeeper Fred Barber stayed on his line and Dorman tried to clear the ball. But his effort sliced past Barber into the net.

Ban Schumacher, says Brazilian captain

RIO DE JANEIRO (R) — Carlos Alberto Torres, captain of Brazil's 1970 World Cup winning team, was quoted as saying West German international goalkeeper Harald Schumacher should be banned after drug-taking revelations in a forthcoming autobiography. "Soccer is a serious thing. There is no doubt that what Schumacher was looking for was publicity for his controversial book," Carlos Alberto told the newspaper Folha De Sao Paulo in an interview. "I think that if Schumacher and his teammates who admitted having taken stimulants are eliminated from professional soccer, officials would be giving a good example," he said. Schumacher revealed he and several colleagues had taken drugs in his book "Staring Whistle," extracts from which were published recently in a West German magazine.

7 countries interested in World Cup

ZURICH (R) — Seven countries have applied to stage the 1994 World Cup finals, the International Football Federation (FIFA) said. The national associations of Algeria, Benin, Brazil, Chile, Morocco, South Korea and the United States met the Feb. 28 deadline for applications. The next stage is for the seven to confirm or withdraw its applications by April 10 having studied FIFA's conditions for hosting the finals. Final applications will then have to be submitted by Sept. 30. The decision on who hosts the 1994 finals will be taken by FIFA's executive committee on June 30 next year.

Ireland replaces Wales in Dunhill Cup

ST. ANDREWS, Scotland (AP) — Ireland has replaced Wales among the eight seeded teams in this year's one million dollar Dunhill Cup golf tournament, officials said. The change came as a reward for the Irish team, which ousted highly rated Spain in last year's event. It means Wales, a quarterfinalist a year ago, will have to go through regional qualifying to make the field for this year's tournament, set for Oct. 1-4 at the old course of St. Andrews. The other seeded teams are England, Scotland, the United States, Japan, Canada, Spain and defending-champion Australia.

UEFA concerned over fan violence

ZURICH, Switzerland (R) — A senior European Football Union (UEFA) official Tuesday urged national associations to take stronger measures to curb spectator violence. UEFA Secretary-General Hans Bangert was reacting to weekend incidents in Italy, West Germany and the Netherlands, where Den Haag's home tie with Ajax Amsterdam was abandoned at halftime after rioting at the Zuiderpark Stadium. "We are naturally very concerned about them and do hope the national associations and the local security authorities will take the strongest possible measures to crush this expanding soccer hooliganism," he said.

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OPERA

BAND OF THE HAND

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PLAZA

HEARTBURN

Performances: 3:30, 6:00, 8:30, 10:30

Cinema Tel: 622198

RAGHADAN

BAND OF THE HAND

Performances: 12:15, 3:30, 5:30, 8:30, 10:30

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at midday on the London foreign exchange and bullion markets on Tuesday.

One sterling	1.4610/20	U.S. dollars
One U.S. dollar	1.3327/37	Canadian dollar
	1.8330/40	West German marks
	2.0695/705	Dutch guilders
	1.5420/30	Swiss francs
	37.94/99	Belgian francs
	6.1000/50	French francs
	1303.5/1304.8	Italian lire
	153.60/70	Japanese yen
	6.4550/600	Swedish crowns
	6.9800/50	Norwegian crowns
	6.9000/50	Danish crowns
One ounce of gold	403.30/403.80	U.S. dollars

LONDON STOCK MARKET

LONDON (AP) — A late rally pushed prices mostly higher on the London stock exchange Tuesday. Trading was thin, brokers said, exaggerating market swings.

The Financial Times closed up 15.2 points, at 1998.3, after being down by as much as 15.4. The narrower F.T. 30-share index was up 9.0 at 1613.5.

The market was hurt early in the day by Wall Street's weakness on Monday, profit-taking on pharmaceutical shares and the Bank of England's offer to lend money to discount houses at above-market rates, brokers said. The Bank of England's move indicated that a cut in British interest rates was not imminent.

But late in the session, some investors came into the market seeking bargains and jumped in this trading.

Oil shares rose on news that Saudi Arabia is producing less oil than is allowed in its quota.

On the British government bond market, short-dated issues were unchanged and longs up 1/32.

The Financial Times index of 30 industrials closed at 1613.5, up 9.0.

YOUR DAILY Horoscope

from the Carroll Righter Institute

FORECAST FOR WED., MARCH 4, 1987

GENERAL TENDENCIES: It's a great day for producing practical and down-to-earth results. Handle those material concerns in such a fashion that you will be able to forge ahead into new prosperity.

ARIES (Mar. 21 to Apr. 19) If you study both your monetary requirements and assets, you can devise a fine plan for greater abundance.

TAURUS (Apr. 20 to May 20) Plan how to improve your health and appearance and follow through. Be with fine friends tonight.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 21) Listen to your mate's problems and reach a better understanding. This brings about greater closeness.

MOON CHILDREN (June 22 to Jul. 21) Study better ways of convincing your friends of your true affection for them.

LEO (Jul. 22 to Aug. 21) Contact a bigwig who needs support for some public aim. Adhere to your regular vocation and make progress now.

VIRGO (Aug. 22 to Sept. 22) If you study all the factors and details connected with it, that new venture can be quite successful.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22) A person in business is willing to be of assistance to you. Talk over a joint venture with your mate.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21) You can easily convince a partner to help you with a project that is vital. Gain more support in the business world.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21) If you persevere in the work you have going, you can get excellent results. Take it easy tonight and rest.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 20) Find out what an entertainment will cost and then decide whether or not it is worth your while.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 21 to Feb. 19) Try to make your home more functional. If you invite anyone in tonight, make you sure you feel comfortable with them.

PISCES (Feb. 20 to Mar. 20) Much data can be gathered now that will get you ahead in the days to come. Be happy with friends tonight.

IF YOUR CHILD IS BORN TODAY ... ha, or sha, will want the finer things in life, although of a practical nature. One who is apt to ponder over something too long before reaching a conclusion, so teach your son, or daughter, to speed up the thinking process. If not, others can get ahead in the race for success.

THE Daily Crossword

by Melvin Karmowitz

ACROSS

- Before sphere
- Thin
- Campus area for short
- Author Faton
- "Dollars" name
- Biblical
- propagation
- Handy man?
- Singing group of yore
- Came up
- Forest unit
- Dillon or Helm
- Southern natives
- Atmosphere: pret.
- Doctors' go.
- Jel
- Build
- La —, Bolivia
- Handy man?
- "Torn"
- Comet's
- Biblical word
- Sts.
- Author Wiesel
- Pungent bulb
- Arabian gull
- Solo
- To place
- Struggles
- Man on the way up?
- Dr. composer
- Dress form
- Slaughter of
- Actual
- Of the cheek
- Negatives

DOWN

- Micca phlegm: var.
- Dash
- Comet or Ted
- Splendid
- Writer Daniel and family
- Hoppy
- Building wings
- Wire measure
- Cornish
- Gallon part
- Deer
- Old-time color fresco
- Medicinal amount
- "Grand Ole"
- Outright e.g.
- Track events
- Foot part
- Urea —
- Orally
- Bart and family
- Water buffalo
- Dismay, var.
- N.Z. native
- Acoustic
- Had dye
- Most
- Put place
- Put into
- Financial difficulties
- Dealer in supplies
- Hippon
- "Tempt"
- Booster rocket
- Open
- Unsubstantiated
- Karlsruhe
- Twig angle
- Frenchman: the wildest
- Cry of rivalry
- Soap frame
- bar
- Mr's dad
- Guide's note

Arab Bank Ltd. profits JD 23.5m, boosts assets

AMMAN (J.T.) — The net profit of Arab Bank Ltd. during 1986 amounted to JD 23.5 million, out of which JD 15.8 million were transferred to various reserve accounts.

According to a report in the Arabic daily Ad Dustour, the bank's board of directors has recommended distributing JD 7.7 million in dividends to shareholders at a rate of JD 3.500 per share which carries a nominal value of JD 10,000 each.

The report noted that Arab Bank Ltd. has increased its assets and deposits to JD 3.2 billion and JD 3.0 billion, respectively, at the end of last year despite the decline in the dollar's value.

The report, while mentioning that 70 per cent of the bank's deposits were in foreign currencies (mostly dollars), said that the assets of the Arab Bank Group increased by 7.2 per cent during 1986 amounting to \$12.7 billion.

Jordan French Insurance Company profits JD 0.8m

AMMAN (J.T.) — The board of directors of the Jordan French Insurance Company (JFIC) has recommended distributing JD 500,000 in dividends to shareholders. The amount represents a rate of 50 per cent of the JD 1,000 par value of each share.

The company, reporting JD 750,600 in net profit during 1986, would transfer JD 25,600 or 25 per cent of its net income to retained earnings.

According to a report in the Arabic daily Ad Dustour the JFIC net profit represents 75.1 per cent of the total capital of the company, which earned JD 5 million from its operations during 1986, an increase of 58.6 per cent over 1985 earnings.

Bank extends JD 0.5m to municipalities and villages

AMMAN (J.T.) — Cities and Villages Development Bank approved loans totalling JD 544,000 during January 1987.

According to a report in the Arabic daily Sawt Al Sha'ah, JD 388,314 were allocated to municipalities to open and asphalt roads (JD 14,000), to pay for land appropriations (JD 102,314), to make road pavements and sidewalks (JD 15,000) and to build schools and other productive projects (JD 257,000).

Allocations to village councils amounted to JD 155,686 of which JD 77,000 were earmarked for roads, JD 53,686 for land appropriations, JD 11,000 for electricity and JD 14,000 for schools.

Drawdowns by municipalities and village councils on the loans during January 1987 amounted to JD 312,281 and JD 136,270 respectively while repayments on medium and long term loans by the two groups amounted to JD 485,394 and JD 94,018.

IMF report shows lowest inflation in industrial countries in 25 years

WASHINGTON (AP) — Prices paid by consumers in the major industrial countries rose an average of only 2.3 per cent last year, the smallest increase of inflation in 25 years, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) reports.

In West Germany, prices actually declined for the year by 0.2 per cent, the IMF said in a report released Sunday. It was the first drop in that country since 1950, which was the first year of recovery after World War II.

Complete annual figures for Japan were not yet available, but the rate of inflation dropped below one per cent yearly in 1986, the report said.

By November, the latest month given, prices in Japan were also dropping, at an annual rate of 0.3 per cent. In 1985, Japan's inflation rate was two per cent, the smallest increase of any of six major industrial countries.

The U.S. rate was among the lowest: 1.9 per cent, compared with 3.6 per cent in 1985, the report said.

Of the six major non-communist countries, Canada had the highest inflation rate for 1986 — 4.2 per cent, up from four per

cent in 1985, the report said.

Canada was the only one among them to show a rising trend.

Norway also showed an increase to 7.2 per cent from 5.7 per cent.

Britain's rate was 3.4 per cent, down from 6.1 per cent and France reported 2.5 per cent, down from 5.8 per cent, the report said.

Figures for Italy were incomplete for 1986, but at the end of June, Italy's annual rate was placed at 6.1 per cent, down from 9.2 per cent the year before.

The IMF said the Benelux countries — Belgium, The Netherlands and Luxembourg — posted declines averaging 0.6 per cent in 1986. Belgium had 1.3 per cent, The Netherlands 0.2 per cent and Luxembourg 0.3 per cent.

Inflation drops in poor nations

For poor countries as a group, the fund said the rate has been declining, down to an annual rate of 31.1 per cent last October, only a little more than half the 1985 inflation of 60.6 per cent.

U.S. backs cutting 'mixed credits'

WASHINGTON (AP) — The U.S. government announced on Monday it will back a proposed international accord to cut down the diversion of aid money, originally provided to help poor countries, to subsidize industry in richer countries.

Mr. John Bohn, president of the government's Export-Import Bank (Exim Bank), said the agreement would make it more expensive for the governments of big industrialized countries to divert money in such a manner.

"(The agreement) forces a clear distinction between trade finance on the one hand and truly concessional development aid on the other," Mr. Bohn said in a statement.

The accord applies only to subsidies on industrial goods. Subsidies for the sale of farm products are granted under a different system.

The granting of "mixed credits" by governments of the rich industrial countries consists of using aid money appropriated at low interest rates to promote the sale of nuclear plants, jet aircraft and other expensive high-technology items. Such credits usually require the borrowing country to spend the money in the lending country and are referred to as "tied aid."

France, Japan, Britain and the United States are among the countries that make most use of mixed credits. Governments of various nations have spent \$7 to \$10 billion that way over the last five years, according to Mr. Ted Chapman, international

affairs officer at the Export-Import Bank.

Congress has authorized the administration of President Ronald Reagan to set aside \$100 million in a fund for competition with subsidies from other countries. The Reagan administration is asking for another \$200 million.

Congress has also authorized use of money appropriated to the U.S. Agency for International Development.

However, U.S. officials say they are opposed to the practice and would like to see it abolished.

The Exim Bank said the 12 countries of the European Community have already endorsed the proposed accord. They are West Germany, France, Britain, Ireland, Italy, Denmark, Belgium, The Netherlands, Luxembourg, Spain, Portugal and Greece.

Still to be determined is whether Japan will go along with the agreement, as well as nine

other countries in the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development.

If Japan refuses, the negotiation will have to start over. The governments, 23 in all, have promised their answers by mid-March.

A first phase of the accord would go into effect July 1. After that, no mixed credit would be allowed unless the part of it that is an outright gift — the "grant element" — is at least 30 per cent of the total. Currently, it can be as little as 25 per cent.

A second stage of the accord would go into effect in July 1988. It would raise the minimum grant element to 35 per cent, and would prohibit any subsidised loans to "relatively rich" countries, where average incomes are \$4,000 a year or more. Lending governments would have to change the interest rates prevailing in their own country on such loans.

The rate was up from a record high 2.9 per cent in December, and continued its steady climb from past months, the ministry said. The rate was 2.8 per cent in November and October.

Officials said the rate, by rising above two per cent levels for the first time since official statistics were first tallied in 1953, had broken a psychological barrier.

Mr. Hajime Tamura, minister of international trade and industry, told a news conference he had been expecting the jobless rate to grow but the most recent rate "will have a serious psychological impact on the people."

Labour ministry officials attributed the increase to the effect of the strong yen. The statistics "reflect changes in the industrial structure stemming from the high yen, particularly the decline of such manufacturing industries as shipbuilding," ministry official Akira Ono said.

Since September 1985, when finance ministers from Japan, the United States, West Germany, Britain and France agreed to bring down the strong U.S. currency, the yen has appreciated more than 60 per cent against the dollar.

The high yen has made Japanese exports more expensive in other countries and as a result, Japanese manufacturers have been forced to cut production, labour and profits.

The average jobless rate for 1986 was 2.8 per cent, the highest recorded yearly average, the government announced early this year.

Steel, shipbuilding and coal companies — industries already ailing before the yen's climb — in particular have been forced to lay off large numbers of employees.

Japan's jobless rate was still far below most other industrialised countries.

Jobless rate in Japan hits new record

TOKYO (AP) — Japan's jobless rate hit a record three per cent in January, the highest level in 34 years, a labour ministry official said Tuesday.

The rate was up from a record high 2.9 per cent in December, and continued its steady climb from past months, the ministry said. The rate was 2.8 per cent in November and October.

Officials said the rate, by rising above two per cent levels for the first time since official statistics were first tallied in 1953, had broken a psychological barrier.

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Demand for sterling increases

LONDON (R) — The British pound rose strongly in European trading Friday morning and dealers said it would have gone even higher if the Bank of England had not intervened in the foreign exchange markets to steady it.

They said interest in trading the recently volatile dollar against the West German mark and Japanese yen was fading. The pound opened 1 1/2 pence higher at 2.8753 West German marks, and rose to a high of \$1.5683, up from Monday's close of \$1.5663, for gains of around five pence and two cents so far this week.

The dollar, meanwhile, firmed modestly against the mark, to 1.8335 marks from Monday's

close of 1.8315 marks. Dealers said it was unclear whether Tuesday's intervention by the Bank of England, Britain's central bank, was made under the Feb. 22 agreement in Paris of the influential Group of Five industrial nations and Canada to stabilise the dollar.

They said the bank appeared to have sold pounds to buy marks, a move that would not have a direct effect on the dollar-pound rate.

Many dealers believe the bank's intervention was aimed at heading off an early cut in interest rates, and to keep the currency itself at low enough levels to help British exporters.

Bank of England officials have, as usual, declined comment.

Dealers said demand for pounds was boosted by widespread expectations that British interest rates would probably remain at fairly high levels, at least until the presentation of a new budget on March 17.

The rates are now at levels that give investors much higher returns than are available for other major currencies.

Meanwhile, they said the Feb. 22 agreement has so far steadied the dollar, reducing speculative interest in playing the dollar-mark and dollar-yen market.

"People were getting fed up with the dollar," said one London dealer.

Colombo tea earnings fall

COLOMBO (AP) — Earnings from tea, Sri Lanka's top export, fell by \$112 million last year compared with 1985, according to a government-owned bank.

The statistics released last week by the central bank said that in 1985, export earnings from tea totalled 12 billion rupees (\$480 million) compared with 9.2 billion rupees (\$368 million) in 1986 due to a drastic drop in tea prices.

Sri Lanka produces more than 200 million kilograms of tea annually, with exports ranging between 170 and 190 million kilograms.

The statistics said tea prices that averaged 30 rupees (\$1.20) per kilogramme in 1986 brought in 50 rupees (\$2) in 1985.

In an economic performance report for the first half of 1986, the central bank said one of the reasons for the price decline last year was a threat by Tamil separatists to contaminate tea exports with cyanide.

The other reasons were "irregular and limited offerings of quality tea due to less active demand from traditional buyers and the financial difficulties experienced by West Asian countries in the wake of the oil price slump," the report said.

A price collapse would hurt those developing nations which depend heavily on coffee sales for foreign exchange. For the consumer, lower prices may reach supermarkets this spring.

The largest producer is Brazil, also the Third World's biggest debtor, which last month suspended payments of interest on \$68 billion due to foreign banks of its \$109 billion foreign debt.

Coffee prices nosedive

LONDON (R) — Coffee prices tumbled Tuesday after producing and consuming nations failed in talks here to set export quotas to defend prices in an oversupplied world market.

The price of robusta coffee beans for delivery in May plunged £230 (\$360) to £1,270 (\$1,980) a tonne in London trading, its lowest since September, 1982.

Later, it recovered a little but a mid-morning price around £1,325 (\$2,065) was still way down on £1,500 (\$2,350) Monday night.

The nosedive followed the overnight failure of talks to set export quotas at the International Coffee Organisation (ICO), a trade body grouping consumers and producers.

Trade sources predicted a price war as exporters try to maximise their share of a falling market and coffee-roasting companies hunt for bargains.

A price collapse would hurt those developing nations which depend heavily on coffee sales for foreign exchange. For the consumer, lower prices may reach supermarkets this spring.

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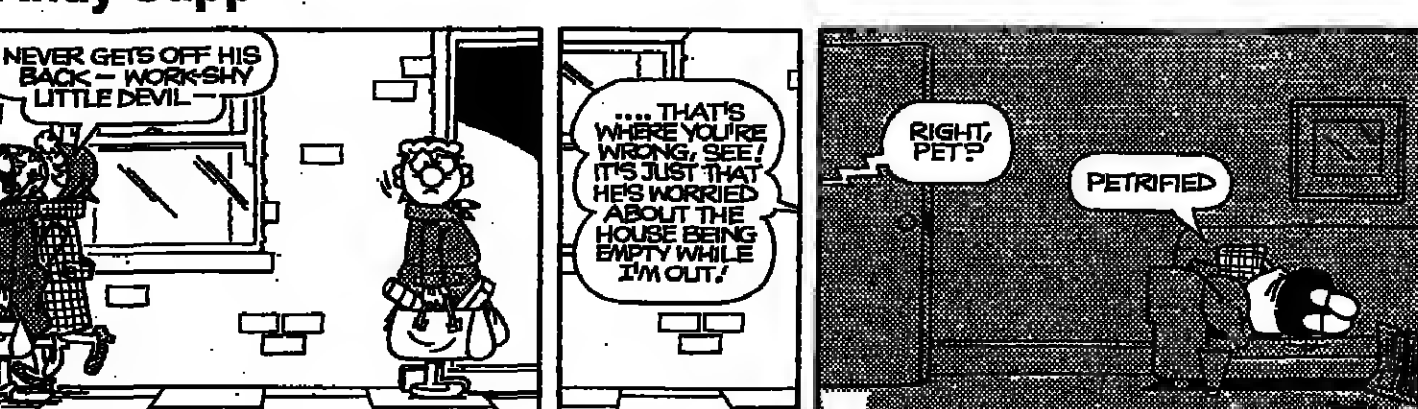
Peanuts



Mutt'n' Jeff



Andy Capp



THE BETTER HALF.

By Harris



JUMBLE.

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME by Henri Arnold and Bob Lee

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

LAUDT

VAHNE

YARNLE

FACEEF

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Answer: "O O O O O O" WITH "H I S"

(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: TONIC CHASM PARLOR RADIOS

Answer: The ogologist found fruit with everything except this — HIS MIRROR

Police, protesters battle in Seoul

SEOUL (R) — Demonstrators battled police on the streets of Seoul Tuesday, but the massive police presence appeared to have foiled efforts by South Korea's opposition to stage a protest march against alleged widespread government torture.

Thousands of uniformed, helmeted riot police and many more plainclothes men guarded public buildings and stood on alert at crossroads and subway entrances, breaking up the slightest attempt at a gathering.

As groups of demonstrators, many carrying paper South Korean flags, tried to converge on the rally site at a city centre park, they found their way blocked by phalanxes of police.

All attempts to break through the police lines or to distribute leaflets to passers-by were met with volleys of teargas grenades. At several locations witnesses saw students stone police lines, only to be dispersed by teargas.

Witnesses said they saw several dozen arrests.

The Seoul march was planned as part of a nationwide series of demonstrations.

At one p.m. (0500 GMT), the hour the Seoul demonstrators were due to meet at the park, Reuters correspondents in the streets estimated only about 2,000 protesters had attempted to get through police lines.

Seoul authorities said earlier that they would deploy 30,000 police in the capital with thousands more in reserve.

More than 30 people, including dissident leaders Kim Dae-Jung and Kim Young-Sam, were placed under house arrest to prevent them taking part in the march.

Police rounded up more than 2,200 people overnight, among them students and worker activists but also many criminal suspects, ahead of the planned demonstration, a spokesman said. Most were later released.

It was the second time in a month that opposition leaders had tried to take their anti-government protests into Seoul's streets.

On Feb. 7, overwhelming police strength crushed attempts to hold a memorial service near Seoul's Myeongdong Cathedral for a student who died under police torture in January.

Tuesday's demonstrations were again intended to commemorate the youth, Park Chong-Chol, and protest at what the opposition calls the government's regular use of torture and brutality against its political foes.

The authorities acknowledge Park was tortured but deny the wider charge.

In the absence of the dissident Kims, opposition forces were led Tuesday by the President of the New Korea Democratic Party (NKDP), Lee Min-Woo.

Mr. Lee made a series of attempts to leave his Seoul office, surrounded by supporters, but was blocked by a squad of riot police who used teargas to disperse the politicians.

Buddhist monks joined the protests at various points. In central Seoul, a large force of police blocked the historic Chogyo Temple to prevent monks entering to hold a memorial service for Park.

Tuesday's attempted rally coincided with official celebrations marking the sixth anniversary of President Chun Doo Hwan's inauguration.

Shevardnadze confronts jeering crowd of demonstrators in Australian capital

CANBERRA, Australia (Agencies) — Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze confronted a jeering crowd of demonstrators Tuesday in front of parliament and his attempt to talk to them was drowned out by anti-Soviet shouts.

The crowd of Afghans, Jews and East European demonstrators rejected Mr. Shevardnadze's attempt to shake hands. Instead, they turned on loud tape recorded national songs, booed and screamed abuse.

Moments before, Mr. Shevardnadze had alighted from his official limousine in front of the Parliament House steps, where Australian Foreign Minister Bill Hayden was waiting to escort him inside for talks and lunch.

At that point Mr. Shevardnadze, 59, looked across at the demonstrators and, with security men running to form a cordon around him, headed for the crowd of about 200 who were

being kept back behind barricades by police with dogs.

With television crews surrounding and jostling him, Mr. Shevardnadze walked up to the barricades and put out his hand. He spoke in Russian to one group, but his remarks were lost in the shouting. He then shrugged, turned his back and walked back to parliament house, about 50 metres away.

The Soviet Union assured Australia Tuesday that it had no ulterior motives in seeking commercial and diplomatic links with the island nations of the South Pacific, according to a senior Australian official.

Mr. Shevardnadze gave the assurance at the meeting with Mr. Hayden soon after his arrival for a three-day visit, the official said.

He quoted Mr. Shevardnadze as saying recent Soviet offers of fishing and other commercial deals with financially troubled

island states were not an attempt to penetrate the region.

Mr. Hayden had expressed concern that the Soviet Union's moves might go beyond commercial activity leading to East-West tensions in the region, the official said.

Washington has condemned the Soviet offers as a disguised attempt to gain a strategic foothold in the area, long regarded as a Western preserve.

Mr. Hayden bluntly told Mr. Shevardnadze that Australia was "firmly and unequivocally committed to its alliance with the United States as a fundamental of our national interests," the official said.

The Australian foreign minister also expressed concern over the growing Soviet military presence in Cam Ranh Bay and Da Nang in southern Vietnam, the official said without revealing Mr. Shevardnadze's response.

Prague to adhere to Soviet reforms

VIENNA (R) — Czechoslovak Prime Minister Lubomir Strougal has pledged his country's adherence to Soviet reform policies in a speech diplomats said hinted at differences in the Prague leadership on how to react to Moscow's current programme.

The official news agency Cetecka said Mr. Strougal told Communist Party officials and managers in Prague: "The road on which the Soviet Union has embarked is also Czechoslovakia's road."

Mr. Strougal, seen by diplomats as a pragmatist in the Prague leadership, said: "When we declare today again and absolutely unequivocally our adherence to the policy of the Soviet Union ... there is nothing opportunist in it."

Diplomats said Mr. Strougal seemed to be answering comments by leading hard-line ideologue Vasil Bilak who said last month: "In applying the experiences of fraternal parties we must not proceed in an opportunist manner, but by respecting the conditions in which we live and our own experience."

Czechoslovakia has followed

rigidly orthodox economic and social policies since the "Prague spring" reform movement was snuffed out by the Warsaw Pact invasion of 1968.

But recently Prague has had to rethink its policies as Mr. Gorbachev's wind of change blew through Soviet life. While Mr. Strougal has backed the Moscow line, others such as Mr. Bilak and President Gustav Husak have reacted less enthusiastically.

Mr. Strougal said the new road was also "a struggle to increase the weight and authority of socialism in the world."

Thai jets to hit opium warlord

BANGKOK (R) — Thai F-5E fighter-bombers will attack bases of Burmese opium warlord Khun Sa in a campaign to stamp out his drug-smuggling empire, air force officials said Tuesday.

They said the U.S.-made planes would also provide cover for planned troop assaults on the jungle strongholds of Khun Sa's ethnic Shan rebels, who traffic in vast amounts of heroin and opium.

The officials could not say when the attacks would take place. Burma has already permitted Thai forces to cross the border.

They could not confirm press reports that the Shan had acquired Soviet-made SAM-7 anti-aircraft missiles.

Khun Sa, the most powerful warlord in the opium-growing Golden Triangle region straddling Burma, Thailand and Laos, has operated from north eastern Burma since being forced out of northern Thailand in 1982.

Burmese troops last month began a campaign against several ethnic rebel minority groups based near the Thai border who have been fighting for autonomy since Burma won independence from Britain in 1948.

Border patrol police said five Karen wounded in fighting Tuesday with Burmese troops were in hospital in Mae Sot in Tak province.

Rangoon has said its forces have armed friendly tribes to help them attack rebel groups but have otherwise given only sketchy details.

Aquino: Democracy ended coup threats

MANILA (R) — Philippine President Corason Aquino said Tuesday the near-constant coup threats against her year-old leadership appeared to have been ended by the country's return to constitutional democracy.

The huge vote of confidence represented by last month's vote for a new constitution may have ended the coup era, Mrs. Aquino told a rare news conference.

"I certainly hope that the coups are over and I believe it is over," she said.

In the 12 months since former President Ferdinand Marcos's 20-year rule was ended by a civilian-backed military revolt, Mrs. Aquino has faced three serious coup attempts and countless rumours and uncertainties.

The Philippines' 24 million voters on Feb. 2 gave four-to-one support for the new charter, which gives Mrs. Aquino a six year term and re-establishes congressional democracy.

Asked about the security of her presidency, Mrs. Aquino said congressional elections in May and local polls in August would restore full democracy.

The country's economy was turning around after several slump years and the stock market was bullish, she said.

"All things are in place, the programmes are in place, we have instituted the necessary reforms," she said, adding: "All things considered I think everything is okay in the Philippines and that all will work well."

"I put my trust in the Filipino people because they are determined not only to support this government but also to do their

part in ensuring the success of this country."

Mrs. Aquino's optimism mirrored that of her armed forces chief, Gen. Fidel Ramos, who said recently that coup-plotters had lost their chance.

Western diplomatic analysts have also begun to say recently that they believe Mrs. Aquino is increasingly secure in her post.

Meanwhile gunmen described by the military as possible Communist guerrillas shot dead an army colonel and his driver Tuesday in the middle of a Manila traffic jam.

The mid-morning killings came a day after Gen. Ramos ordered strikes on rebel bases in rural areas to check an "alarming" rise in guerrilla violence in the country.

Police said they would investigate all possible angles because the murders might also have involved personal motives.

A military spokesman said Col. Benjamin Casabar and his driver were stopped at a busy intersection in suburban Quezon city when three men approached and shot them.

Police said the gunmen took the colonel's pistol after the shooting and fled in a car they commandeered from another motorist stalled in the traffic jam.

The spokesman described the killers of Col. Casabar, a civil relations officer, as "possibly rebels." He added: "Who else would do this?"

Military intelligence officers say liquidation squads of the Communist New People's Army (NPA) have infiltrated the capital in recent months.

S. Africa frees priest after 8-month detention

JOHANNESBURG (R) — Father Peter Hortop, a Roman Catholic priest detained for eight months under South Africa's state of emergency, has been freed after a world-wide campaign for his release, the church announced Tuesday.

The South African Catholic Bishops' Conference (SACBC) said Fr. Hortop, 56, was released last Friday after Johannesburg Bishop Reginald Ormond met Law and Order Minister Adriaan Vlok.

The Dominican priest was detained in his parish of Springs, east of Johannesburg, shortly after the government imposed a national emergency last June.

Challenged in court to show why Fr. Hortop was detained, the state produced a 20-page document giving reasons based on information provided by a schoolboy.

But the SACBC said the priest at no stage faced charges.

A world-wide day of prayer for Fr. Hortop was held last November. "We must thank thousands of people throughout the world who have been praying and sacrificing for him and suffering with him and all our detainees," Bishop Wilfred Napier, the SACBC president, said.

So-called restriction orders have been placed on Fr. Hortop, barring him from entering schools or attending meetings of the anti-apartheid United Democratic Front (UDF) movement, the episcopal conference said.

Some 25,000 people, the overwhelming majority of them blacks, have been held under emergency, according to independent monitoring groups, and political violence has resulted in some 2,400 deaths in South Africa since February, 1984.

Jailed Soviet dissident goes on hunger strike

MOSCOW (R) — Veteran Soviet dissident Genrikh Altunyan, serving a seven-year term in a labour camp for anti-state activities, has begun a hunger strike to demand his release, Nobel Peace laureate Andrei Sakharov said.

Dr. Sakharov said Altunyan, 53, had informed relatives he had put no time limit on his fast and would continue it until he was freed.

Altunyan is one of 28 dissidents not among some 150 freed last month, apparently as part of

Kremlin leader Mikhail Gorbachev's reform drive, about whom Dr. Sakharov said he was particularly concerned.

"Apart from Altunyan, we have heard nothing of the fate of any of them," he told reporters at his apartment Monday night.

All of the 28 are serving hard labour sentences for anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda, most of them at a camp in Perm province in Siberia, Dr. Sakharov said.

Pravda cites Lenin in support of Gorbachev reform drive

MOSCOW (R) — The Communist Party newspaper Pravda Tuesday invoked the authority of Vladimir Lenin, founder of the Soviet state, to justify Kremlin leader Mikhail Gorbachev's drive for economic and social renewal.

Pravda quoted from letters written by Lenin in early 1922 that demanded far-reaching changes in the style of work of government bodies in Moscow and railed against bureaucracy,

themes identical to those developed by Mr. Gorbachev.

The newspaper explicitly linked Lenin's name to the idea of "perestroika" (reorganisation).

Lenin's works are a decisive source of authority in the Soviet Union, and Pravda's identification of him as an original advocate of "perestroika" underscored the party line that there is no alternative to Mr. Gorbachev's policies.

Actor Randolph Scott dies

LOS ANGELES (R) — Randolph Scott, the quiet-talking hero of a string of Hollywood western films, including *Badman's Territory* and *Ride the High Country*, died in his sleep at the age of 89, his son-in-law said.

Scott died peacefully at his home in the luxurious Bel-Air district of Los Angeles after suffering from a weak heart and bouts of pneumonia in recent years, the son-in-law, Sam Tyler, said.

A chance meeting between Scott and multi-millionaire film producer Howard Hughes on a Hollywood golf course led the actor into a film career that spanned 35 years and covered 100 films.

His early films included *Island of Lost Souls* and *Heavenly Creatures*. He later played a hero in military films — *To the Shores of Tripoli* and *Bombardier* — and starred in romantic comedies such as *Follow the Fleet* and *My Favorite Wife*.

But it was as a Western hero, fast on the draw but short on words, that Scott made his name. *Badman's Territory*, made in 1946, was probably Scott's biggest film success and prompted him to devote much of the remainder of his career to Westerns, including 39 big-budget films made in 16 years.

They included *Abilene Town*, *Sanata Fe*, *Hangingman's Knot*, *The Stranger Wore a Gun*, the *Bounty Hunter* and *Decision at Sundown*.

For four successive years, from 1950 until 1953, Scott was listed among the 10 top box office stars and he made a fortune for his producers and for himself.

Ten years ago, with earnings from his film career and with investments in land, oil wells and gas, Scott was estimated to be worth up to \$100 million.

Born the son of an engineer in Orange County, Virginia, Randolph Crane Scott went to private schools and the University of North Carolina and became a textile manufacturer.

Quakes continue to shake northern New Zealand

WELLINGTON (R) — Earthquakes and aftershocks are still shaking areas of northern New Zealand following strong tremor which left 3,000 people homeless.

Four earthquakes measuring up to 4.5 on the Richter Scale have hit the Bay of Plenty and Waikato region in the north-east since midnight Monday (1200 GMT).

No casualties have been reported and no further major damage, civil defence sources said. Twenty-five people were treated for bone fractures after Monday's shock.

"We are recording about five earth tremors every 10 minutes," a government seismologist told Reuters from Rotorua in the central North Island.

Tuesday's quakes have been felt over an area of 100 kilometres, he added.

Former Costa Rican leader approved controversial airstrip

SAN JOSE, Costa Rica (AP) — Former President Luis Alberto Monge said he approved the upgrading of a controversial airstrip in northern Costa Rica after receiving reports of possible invasion from neighbouring Nicaragua.

"I assume full responsibility for this decision that was adopted in defence of the higher interests of the fatherland," Mr. Monge said in a statement Monday. He was president from 1982 to 1986.

The airstrip at the site of an old airport is located near the north western town of Pottro Grande and Santa Elena.

The Tower Commission report, released late last week, said fired National Security Council staff member Lt-Col Oliver North had threatened Costa Rica's current president, Oscar Arias, with a cutoff of \$80 million in U.S. aid if he publicised the existence of the airfield, which was used to resupply the Nicaraguan rebels.

Mr. Monge said U.S. officials made an initial visit to try to persuade him that the Sandinista army would invade Costa Rica if Nicaragua was attacked by U.S. troops or sparred with Honduras.

They were unsuccessful, he said. But at a second meeting, the officials gave him reports from a former Nicaraguan security agent about a possible invasion. "They made me think that this danger was real," he said.

He didn't say when the meetings occurred or identify the Americans.

"Every step was taken as a necessary precaution to defend Costa Rica in the eventuality of an invasion," he said. "It was never thought that that rural airport would serve to provide military support to the forces that within Nicaragua fight against the government of Managua."

Mr. Monge said he released his statement to clear the record. The contra rebels are fighting against the Sandinista government, which came to power in July 1979.

Greece says it has right to conduct research in Aegean Sea

ATHENS (R) — Greece, responding to a warning by Turkey against conducting "activities" in the Aegean Sea, has said it had a right to decide where and how to conduct research or drilling work in the area.

A government spokesman said the Greek position was made clear to Turkey's Ambassador in Athens Nazmi Akman when he met Greek Foreign Affairs Undersecretary Yannis Kapsis last week.

Acting Turkish Prime Minister Kaya Erdem said Monday that Greek activities in the northern Aegean contravened the 1976 Bernese agreement which set the framework for talks on the Aegean continental shelf disputed between Ankara and Athens.

Greece announced last week it intended to pass legislation enabling it to buy a majority stake in an international oil consortium operating in the Aegean because the area was of vital strategic importance to Athens.

The non-Greek members of the consortium, North Aegean Petroleum Corp. (NAPC), have rejected the Greek decision and made clear they plan to go ahead with drilling work east of the island of Thasos this month.

The Greek state-owned Public Petroleum Corp (DEP) has a 25 per cent share in NAPC while Canadian, West German and U.S. firms have 75 per cent.

The Greek statement said: "Greece is not prepared to give up even a trace of its sovereignty rights to the seabed. It has been stressed to ... Mr. Akman that the decision where or how to drill belongs exclusively to the Greek government."

"The Greek government had repeatedly let the Turkish side know that it considers the 1976 Bernese protocol as inactive through the fault of Turkey,"

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Gorbachev's birthday passes quietly

MOSCOW (AP) — The Soviet media, which used to mark leaders' birthdays with columns of praise and announcement of top honours, took little notice of Mikhail Gorbachev's 56th birthday on Monday. Mr. Gorbachev apparently spent the day working, including holding a meeting with the prime minister of Iceland, according to the Soviet News Agency (TASS). Mr. Gorbachev was marking his second birthday since taking over as general secretary of the Communist Party on March 10, 1985. Neither birthday has received much attention in the Soviet press. Before Mr. Gorbachev, the general secretary's birthday was an occasion for the awarding of national medals and acknowledgement of contributions to state affairs.

Boy wins \$500 for staying away from TV

MILLBURN, New Jersey (AP) — An 11-year-old boy who gave up television for a year in a \$500 bet with his mother says he'll use some of the money to buy comic books. The bet ended at 9:01 a.m. (1401 GMT) Monday, but Benjamin Barreaux waited until his mother, Roslyn, handed him five \$100 bills at an afternoon news conference before pressing the TV remote-control. "This is boring," he said half-jokingly as he watched a cartoon. During the past year, he has filled his time reading and his grades have improved from "satisfactory" to "very good." Stacks of magazines and books line his bedroom, and the boy's interest in toy soldiers prompted him to study military history, said Ms. Barreaux. Benji said he would use some of his winnings to increase his comic book collection. Benji's 9-year-old sister, Ashley, said she watched cartoons even though she hates them so she could tell her brother about the plots. Benji's friends "thought I was a nut, at first. Now I get to laugh in their faces because they don't have this," he said as he waved the \$100 bills.

NASA seeks robots for space duties

WASHINGTON (AP) — Three years ago two groaning, grunting astronauts operating in the space shuttle cargo bay pulled the electronic insides out of a failed satellite and restored it to health with a transplant. The task was so demanding that after the flight the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) used it as a test to challenge manufacturers of robots to show what their devices can do. The only company to accept the challenge was a small Minnesota manufacturer of remote control devices used in the nuclear industry, Central Research Laboratories of Red Wing. The NASA task involved removing screws from panels, unplugging and plugging cables and lifting out the electronics box. It was detailed in 31 pages of step-by-step instructions. In a recent demonstration, an engineer from Central Research Laboratories, sitting in front of four television screens and using a metal hand controller, swapped out the instrument box on a mockup 6 metres away, in 3½ hours. It took astronauts George Nelson and James Van Hoften 15 minutes longer when they restored the real Solar Max satellite in April 1984.

Weather department sends wrong report

CHICAGO (AP) — A National Weather Service bulletin that erroneously said an Illinois city had been demolished by a tornado was sent to hundreds of U.S. radio and television stations early Monday and read on the air by some announcers. The bulletin, sent on the weather service's wire at 4:55 a.m. (0955 GMT), said: "At 4:35 a.m. a tornado hit the Rockford, Illinois, Weather Office. This storm was moving south east at 50 MPH (80 KMPH). This is a dangerous storm. Take cover immediately. The entire town of Rockford has been demolished. If you are in the path of this tornado, you should go to a basement shelter if available ... Abandon cars and mobile homes." Five minutes later, a disclaimer was sent explaining that the bulletin was transmitted by mistake, said meteorologist Steve Kahn at the service's Chicago office. Rockford, 139 kilometres north west of Chicago, has a population of about 140,000. The bulletin was part of a test being conducted to prepare for the upcoming tornado season, and was designed only for weather service personnel, Kahn said. He blamed a change in computer software at the service's Chicago office for letting the bulletin get out.

Half U.S. prostitutes infected with AIDS

ATLANTA, Georgia (AP) — Early results from a study indicate that drug use is rampant among U.S. street prostitutes and as many as half are infected with the virus that causes AIDS. Researchers from Howard University, who are surveying as many as 200 prostitutes, found that 13 out of the first 26 they tested were infected with AIDS virus. The findings were presented Monday in Atlanta at the annual convention of the American Society for Microbiology. All 13, as well as nine of the 13 who were not infected, were users of injectable drugs, which would place them at risk for AIDS regardless of their sexual habits. The disease is transmitted most often through sexual contact or contaminated drug needles. "We expected some of them to be drug users, but not all," said a study coordinator, Dr. Robert Delapenha of Howard University's Medical School and hospital. The early study results show the infection rate among street prostitutes may be high. But their drug use means that the study so far is showing little, if anything, about how the women became infected. "We have to preface any conclusions by saying that IV (intravenous) drug use is a confounding factor," Dr. Delapenha said. The early findings in Washington differ from previous surveys in Miami, where a 40 per cent infection rate has been reported among prostitutes, and Seattle, Washington, where a survey found a 5 per cent infection rate.

Gutenberg Bible to be sold at auction

LOS ANGELES (R) — The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Los Angeles will put up for auction art works and books, including a rare Gutenberg Bible, which are expected to raise \$20 million, Archbishop Roger Mahoney said. The most recent sale of a Gutenberg Bible, the first known book printed from movable type, fetched \$2 million at a 1978 auction held by the London-based Christie's, which will handle the latest auction. "This sale will include the largest, single collection of books ever to come on the market," said Stephen Lash, executive vice-president of Christie's. Going up for auction will be part of the Carrie Estelle Doheny collection, which includes more than 7,000 rare books, paintings from the French Barbizon school, tapestries, antique furniture and autographed letters. Doheny, the wife of a California oil magnate, died in 1958 and left the collection to the archdiocese on condition it remain intact for at least 25 years after her death. The Bible, which Doheny added to her collection in 1950, contains only the Old Testament. Mahoney said the money will be used to train priests and to relieve the church of the growing financial burden involved in maintaining the collection.

Soviet film vies for Golden Bear

WEST BERLIN (R) — A Soviet film about artistic turmoil and Jewish emigration, released after a seven year ban as part of the Soviet cinema's proclaimed liberal spring, seems a top candidate Tuesday for the West Berlin International Film Festival's Golden Bear Award. *Gleb Panfilov's The Theme*, receiving its first Western showing in the 10-day festival, will compete with strong U.S. rival films such as the sombre *Night, Mother* by Tom Moore, Oliver Stone's Vietnam film *Platoon* and *Children of a Lesser God* by Randa Haines. The *Theme* was made in 1979. But censors shelved it because of its portrayal of a Jewish artist frustrated at not being allowed to publish and deciding to emigrate to Israel. The film delves into the decay of an artistic establishment corrupted by privilege. Spectacular shots of the snowy Russian landscape around the country house where the drama unfolds projects a strong Russian patriotism. The *Theme* is one of a number of Soviet films now being released as Moscow reconsiders its past harsh censorship laws.

GOREN BRIDGE

BY CHARLES GOREN
AND OMAR SHARIF
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WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ

Q.1—Both vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠AK109432 ♠KQ6 06 ♠A2
The bidding has proceeded:
South West North East
1 ♠ Pass 2 ♠ Pass
? What do you bid now?
Q.2—Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠7 ♠QJ105 09872 ♠AQ64
The bidding has proceeded:
South West North East
Pass Pass 1 ♠ Pass
? What do you bid now?
Q.3—Both vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠AKA ♠710632 036 ♠984
The bidding has proceeded:
North East South West
1 ♠ 2 ♠ ?
? What do you bid now?

Q.4—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♠A875 ♠J93 ♠AQJ987
The bidding has proceeded:
South West North East
1 ♠ Pass 1 ♠ Pass
? What do you bid now?
Q.5—Both vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠KQ107 ♠6 ♠AJ83 ♠K987
The bidding has proceeded:
West North East South
1 ♠ Pass Pass ?
? What action do you take?
Q.6—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♠J65 ♠9852 ♠QJ9 ♠AK5
The bidding has proceeded:
West North East South
1 ♠ Dble 3 ♠ ?
? What action do you take?